THEOLOGY

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EDITORIAL

"THE failure of the Church" has become a sadly hackneyed theme, and in some circles (though not very wide ones) a reaction has lately set in against it. Because many attacks on the Church have been misinformed as regards the facts and have proceeded from assumptions which had little in common with the Christian faith, it is not difficult for the would-be apologist for the Church to find grounds for counter-attack, but the ensuing skirmishes seldom lead to any result, unless it be to the confirmation of existing prejudices. While the Christian should be attentive to criticism of the Church from whatever quarter it proceeds, the criticism that is most worth his attention is that which comes from minds deeply saturated in the deliverances of the Gospel. There is a vast difference between criticism of the Church which upbraids it for failure where it should never promise success, and criticism which exposes the contradiction between the Church as God has created it and the Church as man has defaced it.

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Mr Middleton Murry's new book, *The Betrayal of Christ by the Churches*,[1] contains criticism of both kinds. It might no doubt be a profitable exercise to try to separate the tares from the wheat, but we hope churchmen who read it—and they may be more numerous than Mr Murry expects—will not expend too much energy in shouting down generalizations that are manifestly unfair and in cavilling at exaggerated statements. It is Mr Murry's way to exaggerate what he is looking at and what he is saying at any given moment, and it is a way that has advantages as well as disadvantages. Moreover, there is a romantic strain in his mind which infallibly comes to the surface whenever he starts using such words as democracy or brotherhood. In that he is not peculiar. More romantic nonsense has been written under these captions than under most others. At such points Mr Murry ties himself in knots. But they are not really

[1] Dakers, 5s.

relevant to his general indictment, which springs from a profound concern with the very essence of the Christian faith.

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It is because the general indictment seems to us unanswerable, and is indeed a datum for our thinking, that we hope it will not be side-tracked, and for the same reason we proceed at once to ask ourselves two fundamental questions about it. In the first place, we do not know whether Mr Murry has read Ernst Troeltsch's *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, but he does not seem to have reckoned with the difference, which Troeltsch brings out, between the Church-type and the sect-type of Christian thought. Mr Murry wavers between the two, and wants to have the best of both worlds, but he affords no grounds for supposing this to be possible. On the one hand, he envisages a Church which would knit together national and international society as a whole; but, on the other hand, he writes as though such a Church would be " a society of friends ". Thus he writes:

> The Church is a society of friends, or it is apostate; and that is why the Christian body which took to itself that name, in order to make clear the nature of the mutual obligations of its members, and has striven more steadily than any other body of Christians to act in the common concerns of life in accordance with the implications of that name, is acknowledged by the ordinary man to be a not unworthy approximation to what a Christian Church should be (p. 175).

This is the sect-type of Christian thought; but elsewhere Mr Murry expresses a high regard for both the aim and the achievement of the medieval Church, and aspires after an analogous aim and achievement for the Church to-day. In the long run he will find he cannot have it both ways. Either the Christian community must be a small intensive society, based on a renunciation of elements that are necessary in any political ordering of the world, or it must accept the consequences—the complicated and compromising consequences—that are involved in the idea of a new Christendom. This does not mean that the present relation between the Church and the world is in any sense tolerable, nor that the kind of strategy Mr Murry advocates may not *in the present situation* be the best way of working towards the realization of a new Christendom in the remote future.

The best I hope for is the formation of a new Christian movement which really understands the situation and ignores the Churches, and works in deliberate independence of the ecclesiastical organization. Part of it may—I hope it will—worship in the Church; but it will hope and expect nothing of the institution, and it will be prepared to manifest its Christian faith and Christian purpose in new forms (p. 151).

This looks like the familiar program of the sectaries, and by itself may produce no more than the familiar results.

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The other question we would ask, and it is a related question, is this: Does Mr Murry see the Church, the Ecclesia of God, as a transcendental idea or as an embodied fact? Does he, or does he not, believe (in the words of Article XIX) that " the visible Church is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same ", or (in the words of F. D. Maurice) that " the universal Church . . . stands, the great representative of mankind—redeemed and restored mankind—and this it would do, though it had but a dozen members, and though but one of those members really understood his position " ?[1] We are persuaded that in the bottom of his heart Mr Murry does believe this, however much he denies it with the top of his mind. As Maurice said elsewhere, " unless men were spirits, you could not complain of them for acting as beasts ",[2] and unless the empirical Church were the Ecclesia of God, Mr Murry could not complain of its terrible betrayal. If this is so, he will have to reconsider such propositions as these:

The Church is nothing simply because it *is* the Church; it has religious reality precisely in the measure of its loyalty to Christ. Loyalty to Christ, and the presence of the ever-living Christ which follows upon that loyalty, alone keep the Church in touch with humanity and with God (p. 135).

In that case we should be of all men the most wretched. It would be truer to say that it is because the Church *is* the Church, and ultimately nothing else, that Mr. Murry has been impelled to write this book; unless it had " religious

[1] *The Kingdom of Christ* (1938 Edition), i. 46.
[2] *The Doctrine of Sacrifice* (1879), p. 184.

reality" anyhow, it would be nonsense to talk about its betrayal of Christ. The presence of Christ does not follow upon our loyalty to Him, but is the given fact which makes both loyalty and treachery possible. It is the actual presence of Christ in the world which makes it possible for Mr Murry to say:

> My Christian faith, such as it is, includes the belief that doubt and despair are inevitable to the human soul, but that these were overcome, once for all, in the death of Christ on the Cross (p. 63).

This is *le parole d'un croyant*, though not perhaps *un écrit pour le peuple*.[1]

* * * * *

"We tell our Lord God plainly: If He will have His Church, then He must look how to maintain and defend it: for we can neither uphold nor protect it. And well for us, that it is so! For in case we could, or were able to defend it, we should become the proudest Asses under heaven. Who is the Church's Protector, that promised to be with her to the end, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her? Kings, Diets, Parliaments, Lawyers? Marry, no such cattle."—LUTHER: *Colloquia Mensalia*.[2]

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[1] *Cp.* the title and sub-title of Lamennais' famous book.

[2] Quoted by S. T. Coleridge, *On the Constitution of the Church and State* (1830), p. 130.

Clergy and Laity

How should the clergy be equipped for the task of Christian ministry and what qualifications should they possess? Some there are who would dismiss this question; they would say all that matters in the case of the Christian minister[1] is character—not knowledge or ability. But such an over-simplification turns on too clerical a view of the Church; it implies that the minister should be a paragon of Christian virtues and, consequently, that the same pure milk of Christian character is not to be expected among the laity. The priest should show the fruits of Christian character—yes. But he is only part of the Church; he has his distinctive rôle in the economy of the whole, and for that needs his own quite specific training and qualifications.

In the words of Canon Barry:[2] "A political party or a social movement which possessed the finest buildings in every district, whole-time agents in every town and village . . . and the appeal of a passionate conviction would hardly feel that it was making full use of such resources if it did not count for more than we can claim to count in the opinions and actions of the people." This is a very moderate statement of the case. When we are oppressed by a sense of frustration in Church work we easily forget that this frustration goes with an overwhelmingly favourable "staffing" situation. The Anglican Church in particular can rest on its endowments, accumulated in history, and can maintain a full-time staff vastly greater than could ever be supported by the voluntary gifts of its members. Yet does the Church make a "spiritual dent" proportional to the staff available? Sometimes it almost seems as though the more clergy there are the less work is done by the laity. Is there something which prevents the clergy from pulling their weight and working with the laity in the full service of the Church? If so, it is not due in the main to individual failings, for the

[1] The argument of this article applies, with varying emphasis, to the position of the full-time ordained personnel in all the main branches of the Christian Church. It is written with special attention to the position of the Anglican Clergy: but most of the generalizations apply equally to the Nonconformist ministry and the priesthood of the Roman Church. I have thus used the words "ministers", "clergy", "priesthood" indiscriminately—and not in relation to any particular confession or denomination.

[2] *The Relevance of Christianity.*

standard of loyalty and unselfish service among clergy is, perhaps, as high to-day as it has ever been during the last thousand years. The roots must rather be sought in institutional causes—the recruitment, training and ecclesiastical setting of the clergy viewed as an occupational group.

It may be objected that the method of approach adopted in this article is " too human ". Some would say that the clergy should not be treated like any other occupational group; that the Church may not be compared with other social organizations and made the subject of " spiritual cost-accountancy ". Surely this is a mistaken objection. The Church of Christ is a Divine-human institution, where God acts in the world for man's salvation. Its ministers are in a special sense called of God. And the grace of God outruns the reckonings of men. That is all true. And so our calculations about the Church are never final; they are, mercifully, liable to be overruled by God's actions. But is it seriously suggested that the Church will be managed *better* if its affairs are left to chance than if an endeavour is made to apply to it the ordinary principles of good management? How frequently, when things have gone badly in Church affairs, do we hear people say: " Ah well, it is God's work; we cannot judge the results !" Such an attitude may represent Christian humility and a recognition of creatureliness; it may also represent laziness.

Canon Cockin has said:[1] " The priest stands among his fellow-men on the Godward side of life. He lives to keep before them continually the fact of the reality of God, to remind them that they must take reckoning with that fact." What is the specialized equipment which can help a man to fulfil so high a calling? It is a familiar experience to hear a talk on some particular job—be it that of teacher, or shop assistant, or bus conductor, or factory manager—which lists all the desirable qualities and attainments until it seems that the humblest aspirant for the job should have a range of knowledge and personal qualities which would rival a joint committee of university professors and saints. And as we move from those trades where the craft is fairly clearly defined (such as that of a machine-tool operative) to those which involve the intangible (such as that of a commercial traveller or of a parson) this tendency increases. So it is of little value to list all the pieces of knowledge which

[1] In a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge.

might be of use in the ministry and to suggest that the already full courses of our theological colleges be augmented by patches of book-learning from every subject under the sun. What we want to discover is not what *may* be useful, but what is the minimum adequate equipment.

The main intellectual requirements of the clergy may be conveniently grouped under the classical heads of " doctrine " and " morals ", although these terms commonly have too narrow a connotation nowadays. The priest must be able to explain to his people what the Catholic Faith is, and by the acts of preaching and teaching, and in the course of his pastoral work, help them to enter into the life and heritage of the Christian Church. And he must be able to assist them in learning what is their Christian duty, in discriminating in the common choices of life and in being awake to the call of God in practical affairs.

Theology is not the whole of Christian life, but the minister cannot help others to understand the Faith unless he understands it himself. With the specialization of knowledge and the relative autonomy of the secular sciences the priest is no longer the " clerc ", the sole intellectual; he is a specialist among specialists. Whatever view is taken of the relation of theology to other branches of learning, the fact remains that unless the minister does his own job—that of expounding doctrine and Holy Scripture—no one else will. The layman will respect the man who is a master of his own craft more than a dabbler in many. There is no excuse for theological illiteracy among the clergy; but it is amazing how much preaching in all denominations fails at this point. How frequently do we hear sermons which carefully invert the methods of the New Testament ! Whereas in the pages of the Gospels our Lord is shown as using the common things of earth to express the truth of God, many preachers use an eternal word as a text for a very earthly conclusion. A phrase from the Sermon on the Mount will be used as an introduction to a rather vague lecture on educational theory—a lecture which could have been given far better by an educationalist. And how often do sermons consist of vague uplift, culled apparently from the " shilling heart-warmers " of the religious bookshelves ! Theology is not an easy study, and the simple exposition of doctrine is still harder; but do we excuse the bad bus driver or farmer solely on the grounds that their crafts are difficult?

The problem of moral teaching is slightly different, for there is no body of moral principles which has the same position within the Church as Christian doctrine. But it is here that the layman is most conscious of the failure of clerical teaching, for the moral decisions which he has to make in his ordinary living are inescapable. Moral platitudes, vague generalizations which do not link on to practice, and coloured phrases are of no use to him. Consider the decisions which have to be made by ordinary men and women each day—how hard to work in one's job, where to buy the groceries, the claims of trade and political organizations, the use of spare time, and a thousand others. Does the Christian Gospel substantiate its claim to be a light to our feet? To be sure, the layman does not want his decisions to be made for him " from outside ", but he does want to know the Christian criteria in making these decisions. Just how are the Christian " data "—the words of Scripture, the dogmas of the Faith, the experiences of Christian worship —linked on to these practical decisions? To answer this question implies a definite " theory of ethical action ". As Troeltsch has pointed out, there is no eternal Christian code of ethics; there is not even an agreed ethical method. But a minister who cannot cope with a problem of moral conduct is as ill-qualified as one who is ignorant of doctrine or exegesis. Yet what do we find? In the face of the practical problems of life, including work or citizenship or leisure, most ministers are not only doubtful as to the conclusions—that might be expected—but show an inability even to start to grapple with the problems; they reveal a disconcerting vagueness, not only as to the facts, but also as to the way in which the Christian Gospel comes into the picture at all. There is one exception to this situation: in the realm of sexual ethics many ministers show a dogmatism which contrasts sharply with their vagueness on other moral issues. The layman quite naturally feels the distinction to be arbitrary and the authority of ministers in both fields is undermined.

It would, however, be incorrect to suggest that the clergy have only to be better equipped in theological and ethical theory and all will be well. Many are inadequately equipped in these studies; but very many more fail not at the point of knowledge, but of expression. When the minister tries to explain to the layman what the Christian Church has learnt to believe and tries to help him to find

out what he ought to do, there often seems to be a barrier between them. This barrier is due to many causes; in my opinion three are important—professionalism, language and class.

When any organization is composed of lay members and full-time officials, leadership readily falls into the hands of the full-time officials. Just because they give their whole working time to the organization, they normally provide the initiative and do most of the creative thinking. Trade unions usually put some limitations on the powers of their full-time secretaries and lay down that certain things can be done only by the ordinary members and lay officials who are actually "working at the bench". They do this because they recognize the power which automatically inheres in the hands of the permanent officials. But in spite of these precautions, trade union leadership is passing more and more into the hands of the full-time secretariat. The Church has not taken any such precautions—indeed, it has done the reverse; many things, both sacramental and constitutional, may be done only by a minister and not by a layman. So the ministry possess not only the power which automatically falls into their hands as full-time officials, but also wide constitutional powers and often a semi-magical respect which reinforces these powers and puts them above criticism.[1] The result is what would be expected. The Church, to a greater extent than almost any other body, is dominated by its full-time employees—the clergy. So completely is this so that for very many people "the Church" equals "the clergy". The comparison with trade unionism must not be pressed too far, yet it is enlightening in showing how far we suffer in the Church from clerical domination and lack of sense of churchmanship among the laity. Ask any trade unionist what "entering the trade union movement" would mean to him, and he would at once reply, "Becoming a trade union member"; to use such a phrase for "becoming a trade union *secretary*" would be ludicrous. And yet we regularly describe the taking of holy orders as "entering the Church"!

[1] I am conscious that these arguments involve serious questions of Church order which I cannot discuss here. But I am convinced that discussion of the ordering of Church life cannot be carried on apart from these practical considerations, and I believe that Church history amply confirms this contention.

Further, history and normal methods of training and recruitment have served not only to increase clerical domination, but also to make the clergy a professional group apart from the laity. A trade union secretary must, in almost all cases, have worked at the bench before he may be appointed to the permanent staff. The minister makes the task of the ministry his life's work. In most cases his experience of the world is limited to school, college and then the ministry. This is in many ways good, but it increases the separation between clergy and laity. Like any other occupational group—school teachers, tooth-paste manufacturers or lorry drivers—they develop a " producer interest ". They tend to view any change, civil or religious, from the standpoint of the way in which it affects their own professional position and the demand for the commodities which they can purvey. They are inclined to say, " Everything will be all right if everyone will take the sort of religious medicine which we are qualified to administer." All professional groups do this in some measure; teachers see the salvation of the world in better education, doctors in better health services, and civil servants in better public administration. Such an attitude is, in the main, unconscious and partly unavoidable. But the combined results of the high degree of clerical control of the Church and the professional segregation of the clergy is a subtle clericalizing of the Christian message with a consequent distortion of doctrine and ethics.

On the individual plane the clergy tend to put the Christian challenge in a form to which response can be made only by clergy or the " devotionally minded ". They suggest that the only things which are really pleasing to God are devotional activities, " Church work " and evangelism in the narrow sense. Few would hold to such an obvious *reductio ad absurdum* if pressed; but a vast deal of preaching, by ignoring all the things on which the majority of people spend most of their time and effort, leads directly to this conclusion. " It is one of the great dangers," says Canon Barry, " of clergy and other teachers of religious ethics that they should expect Christians of all kinds to express the Christian Faith in the same way and predominantly in that way to which their own training has accustomed them, in certain devotional habits and attitudes. This means in effect . . . trying to turn into second-rate mystics people who are really intended by God to express

their religion in quite different ways."[1] How can the Christian Faith be put in such a way that the ordinary man doing an ordinary job can make a response which is integral with the affairs of his daily life?

The other way in which this professionalism shows itself is in pulpit pronouncements about social affairs. At this point the preachers of a transcendental theology are as much offenders as the liberals, although in a somewhat different way. The preacher looks with a gloomy satisfaction on the chaos and social failures of our times and says that all this is the result of depending on man and man's attainments rather than on God. Now there is a truth in this assertion; but just what does it mean as it is commonly made? Does it mean that man, by his very nature, can never achieve anything useful in this world? Hardly, for it would be difficult to discuss a social order which was *uniformly* black; and there is no doubt that good pieces of social organization have in fact been achieved on earth, albeit relatively and imperfectly. Does it rather mean that the chaos and failure could have been avoided if men had "depended on God"—that, for example, the League of Nations might have been made to work in these circumstances? If so, the meaning is still obscure. It may be an assertion that we should get on better in social life if there were a greater percentage of Christians and if they were more devoted Christians. That is, of course, a simple assertion of religious individualism—unobjectionable, as far as it goes, but not going very far. But if the assertion has any more meaning, what is it? How can a piece of social machinery —like the League of Nations or a City Council—"depend on God"? How can it ever be anything but the work of man's effort? The men who make it up may, or may not, be Christians; but the institution itself is by its nature secular. Is it suggested that social machinery should be directly administered by the Church or that those who hold office in civil affairs should undergo a credal test? This is not the place to discuss the question further; all I wish to assert is that most pulpit pronouncements of this kind leave the normal hearer cold. He feels that the preacher is using religious terms to cover a complete vagueness on social affairs. When such pronouncements raise a response among the congregation—the more piously-inclined section, that

[1] *The Relevance of Christianity.*

is—the results are even more disastrous. It is easy to generate a smug spiritual self-satisfaction: " We Christian folk have got the goods; if everyone were like us, wouldn't it be nice ?"

The difficulty of language is one that the cleric shares with most other "intellectuals ". In university and college circles the student picks up a method of speaking which is just confusing to most folk. This is partly a matter of the use of words, but much more the habit of shuffling with abstract ideas which do not convey much to the ordinary practical man. If I may be personal, I have vivid memories of early difficulties in discussing the most simple and practical matters with works foremen and charge hands, just because of using words and sentence structures in ways which were unfamiliar—and be it added that the practical man is often more precise and workmanlike in the use of English than the academic man ! When the speaker is concerned, not with belts, pulleys and conveyors, but with the more important and harder truths of the Christian Faith, this difficulty increases. The remedy is not just to drop into the vernacular and avoid technical terms. The ordinary man has no great objection to technical terms if they are explained to him (though the ordinary woman sometimes has !). It is rather a matter of the thought and sentence structure. Now this difficulty is not peculiar to the parson. It is just as acute for the adult educationalist or the academic man aspiring to politics. How many W.E.A. lecturers have memories of difficulties painfully overcome ! But a W.E.A. lecturer who did not conquer his academic obscurity could hardly hope to survive; yet it is amazing to find how many parsons there are who, after a lifetime of preaching, are still quite incomprehensible to ordinary folk.

And, finally, there is the most serious and most contentious of these barriers, that of " class ". As a result of historical causes the clergy are members of the " professional classes ". Their incomes, the houses they live in, and their standards of life indicate that. As a result, there is a deep gulf between them and most of the folk in this country. Many congregations are entirely middle-class in composition, even in working-class districts. So some clergy can pass their days with hardly a contact with a working man, except perhaps the church caretaker. Few parish priests are in this position, of course. There are usually some working-class folk in

the congregation; pastoral work and visiting lead to contacts with still more. But the very closeness of these contacts, especially at times of personal joy or sorrow such as births, weddings or funerals, may give a false sense of knowledge and mask the tenuous nature of these bridges over the gulf. The minister meets his folk when they are on their best behaviour (because " the parson has called ") or in special circumstances (weddings or funerals). He remains a visitor " from outside ". Close *individual* contacts may go with a complete ignorance of the ordinary life of working folk, of their secular interests, and, above all, of the social organizations which they have built up.

This gulf reveals itself in most sermons. The whole background of the sermon is that of middle-class life—a life in which £400 to £500 per year is a minimum comfortable family income, where a servant and a car are to be assumed.[1] Illustrations, moral injunctions, and a thousand incidental references are unconsciously drawn from this background. Advice directed to working folk is often so artificial as to reveal at once that it comes " from outside ".

I recall listening to an accomplished cleric speaking to a crowd in the open air. The crowd consisted of unemployed and iron-workers in a northern industrial town. The speaker commended foreign missions to them, and supported his argument by saying that a certain missionary college in a land of the East was " just like an English public school ". The response was hardly what the speaker intended. Apparently, he had never before met with anyone who thought of our public schools as anything but admirable institutions. That is not to say that the worker is right, but that we have two different worlds with different objects of admiration, different standards of right and wrong, and different interests. There is good work going on in interpreting to each other the widely sundered worlds of the ecclesiastic and the secular intellectual. Is it not even more important to learn the language not only of these two select cliques, but also of the ordinary man ?

A point at which the clergy reveal the tenuous and individualistic nature of their contact with ordinary folk is in their complete ignorance of the spontaneous institutions of

[1] I do not wish to imply that all clergy are paid at this level, or that all are drawn from the relatively affluent classes. What I am concerned about is the tendency to view that state of life as " normal ".

working-class folk. During the last two hundred years there has grown up, especially in the industrial towns, a whole complex structure of working-class institutions and activities. It is not a closely-knit or uniform structure. Some parts of it still flourish vigorously, some are dying or dead. There are a whole series of clubs and societies of working men, some mainly an excuse for beer drinking, many for more varied activities. There are the Friendly Societies with their many, though decreasing, functions. There are the great economic organs of the trade unions, whose power and importance the present war has heavily underlined. There are the vast trading concerns of the Co-operative Movement, carrying on behind an often dull exterior an amazing range of industrial and commercial activity. There is the political Labour Movement in its various manifestations. And there is the whole system of adult education, organized chiefly around the Workers' Educational Association and the Co-operative Movement. These institutions have received some help from middle-class folk and " intellectuals ", but in the main they are the creation of working men and women. They still call out an amazing amount of loyal and devoted service.

In this country these working-class institutions are in a real sense the creation of the Church. In the closely-knit life of a mining village or one of the cotton towns of Lancashire the same people were leaders in trade unionism, in the Co-operative Movement, and in the local chapels. Beatrice Webb writes of her first contacts with the cotton towns: " It is the only society I have ever lived in, in which religious faith really guides thought and action, and forms the basis to the whole life of the individual and the community." And in this community " the whole social life depends on the chapel and the Co-op."[1] That state of affairs is rapidly passing. The links between the Churches and secular institutions are breaking. Leadership in trade union, Co-operative Society, and local government is no longer drawn predominantly from the Churches. It is passing, but it has not passed; the links are still there, and

[1] These quotations are drawn from Chapter III of Beatrice Webb's *My Apprenticeship* (now published as a " Pelican " book). This is a most absorbing autobiographical account of life in the late nineteenth century. Its great value is in the vivid, intimate and understandable introduction it gives to working-class life and working-class institutions. For this alone it deserves to be widely read by the clergy.

they are by no means dead. Surely it is one of the tragedies of the Church that this breakdown of relationships was speeded by the ignorance of Church folk as to what was going on—ignorance on the part of the Anglican Church as a whole, and of the clerical leaders of the Nonconformist Churches. There have not been many points in history where the Christian faith has entered into vital and intimate relations with practical affairs. Yet here we have one at our very doors. There is one grave obstacle which prevents the academic man from appreciating it—this experience has issued not in books and theories, but in the lives of ordinary men and in the institutions which they have built up. Is it too late for the Church to enter into this body of experiences; to learn from its weaknesses—which are many—and to recognize its achievements?

What, then, can be done? It seems that some changes in methods of recruitment and training for the ministry are needed. Can we have a realistic study of moral theology and, in some colleges, a better grounding in dogmatic theology? But to discuss this matter would be to go outside the scope of this article and my own sphere of competence. There are certain ways, however, in which the clergy themselves may do something to remedy these difficulties.

The first need is for a more careful and conscious effort on the part of ministers to understand their local social and psychological situation, both inside and outside the Churches. An illustration may clarify my meaning. Some time ago I was in touch with a young curate working in an industrial district which I knew. In spite of painstaking and very intensive visiting, which took up most of his time, he obviously knew little of the district and was depressed about his work and about the locality. It seemed that in the course of his visiting he went to each house in his parish and after some introductory small-talk plunged right into a discussion of religion. The result was disastrous. The person to whom he was speaking either made the conventional religious replies or else shut up altogether. The reasons for this failure are fairly obvious. The curate, with his public school, university, theological college background, lived in a different world from the folk he was visiting; his mind and theirs only touched on a superficial plane. It may be suggested that this was only the inexperience of youth—that parish work would in time correct the failing.

But, according to my observation, often this does not happen. Many a parson, after a lifetime of work, is absolutely out of touch with all that ordinary people are thinking and doing in the district. He can do his work because he can speak the language of a small body of " church mice " and can talk with a somewhat wider circle of folk on the plane of religious conventionalities—but that is all. A lesson may be drawn from the methods of the social research worker. An investigator faced with a definite line of research will not plunge right into detailed investigations on his subject. He will spend a very considerable time " smelling out the field ". He will learn the main landmarks, the technical language and the interests of the folk with whom he has to deal in the course of his investigation. Surely the parson, set to work in a strange district and among folk with whom he is unfamiliar, should do something of the same kind. I would suggest that for the first few months in a new district " purposive " visiting should be kept to a minimum. He could then give his time to carrying out a piece of " research " on the district—learning its main features, the interests and concerns of the folk, their main forms of employment, the political and social " atmosphere ", and as much as possible of life *outside* the Churches. In this way he can learn the language of his folk, find out their real concerns and interests, and the points at which they " come alive ". To attempt evangelism without learning first about the lives of the people is surely presumption; it can only mean that the Faith is expressed in meaningless or in highly conventionalized forms.

The next need is for clergy who will participate realistically in the social institutions of the district. This does not necessarily mean " entering politics " in the normal sense. It is good that some ministers do take part in party politics; but in view of their position it is probably right that most should adopt " a certain reserve " in political matters. There are, however, many social institutions outside party politics. In this case the clergy should be prepared to come in " on the ground floor "; to serve *ex officio* as Church representatives on philanthropic bodies is not at all the same thing. Above all, the clergy should take seriously the institutions of the workers. Why, for instance, do so few clergy either trade with or take an interest in their local Co-operative Society? Yet, since parsons, like other men, need boots and bacon, here, surely, is an opportunity

for realistic participation in the institutions which local folk have built up. It may be argued that some Church members are private traders; it is often forgotten that local folk—and among them some of the ablest and most public-spirited—have worked to build up local Co-operative enterprise. In any representative working-class congregation there will be those who are proud of Co-operative enterprise as something to which they and their fellows have contributed. They feel the attitude of the parson, built mainly on class prejudice, as a subtle disparagement of the achievements of working men. In contrast to the way in which the cleric ignores the institutions of working folk, it is interesting to see how many clergy take part in local "Rotary" life. This is all to the good; for the Rotary Movement is good and praiseworthy. But it is an inescapable fact that it is the meeting-ground of the professional and business classes. If the parson makes Rotary and kindred work his *only* activities outside Church work, then he surrenders any claim to stand outside class. For he attaches himself quite definitely to one class—the professional class. Like the lawyer, he may give his services to working folk, but he has no kinship with them. Is such a position tolerable for one who, by his calling, should endeavour to break through the barriers of class and show no respect of persons?

A final and vexed question is that of the standard of living of the clergy. There are, of course, many items which are part of the expenses of the job and which are necessary for its efficient execution. But should the minister expect as a right a standard of *personal* expenditure well above the average of the population? It has been calculated that the average income for each adult member of the population is something under £100 per annum.[1] All ministers cannot and will not limit their personal expenditure to this level; but if some would take this step it would be a real contribution to the life of the Church. Firstly, it would be a witness for a simpler and sounder standard of living, and against the worship of wealth. Secondly, it would give the minister a kinship with the majority of his people rather than with the privileged few. Thirdly, it would ease the strain which falls on the lower-paid clergy of trying to achieve a standard of life which they cannot really afford. Is such a suggestion fantastic? On the contrary, it is perfectly practicable.

[1] Pre-war figures.

It would entail certain sacrifices. Recreations would have to be those which are open to all rather than those which are dependent on exclusiveness. Standards of entertainment might have to be cut—awkward, perhaps, when dealing with the squire, but an advantage with most of the congregation! The minister would surrender the right to a privileged education for his children, irrespective of their ability. Where it is under his control, he could choose the size and locality of his house to correspond with the greater number of his flock rather than with the few. It should be emphasized that I do not suggest any reduction in the expenses of the job—telephones, books, essential travelling, and so on. Often these expenses should be increased. (Why are so many parsons still not on the telephone and, in the larger parishes, without typing assistance?) To separate "expenses" and "personal income" is not always easy; but it is perfectly practicable to make a rough analysis and to scale down personal income to an average level. The Church has committed itself in the Report of the Oxford Conference to work for a reduction in inequality.[1] The amount which can be achieved by voluntary action is small; yet action of this type by the clergy might be a witness for social righteousness and of direct help in the fulfilling of their calling.

If to-day, as in the time of Milton, "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed", this is not in the main due to those who "for their bellies' sake" creep into the fold. Anyone in pursuit of position, prestige, or wealth does not often now seek office in the Church. Rather it is the sins of laziness, lack of imagination, and conventional prejudice on the part of both clergy and laity which are hindering the work of God in the Church. Is it possible to reduce the wastage of our resources so that clergy and laity of all classes may work together and the Church may be strengthened as God's instrument of man's redemption?

W. G. Symons.

[1] See *The Church and the Economic Order*, Part III, Paragraph 2.

Man Left to Himself

I

God is the Creator and man is His creature—that is the fundamental statement about God and man in their relations the one to the other. And creatureliness implies for man dependence, dependence not only in the matter of his origin, but also in the end he exists to serve. For as man comes from God, so he finds the meaning of his life in God. Dependence means obedience—obedience to the will of another, obedience to the will of God. Dependence means that only in this obedience can man find his own fulfilment, the fulfilment of the end for which he was created by God. To fulfil God's purpose for him is for man to become himself, to know the only true freedom that is possible or desirable for man in a universe that has been created by God and that is governed by God. As Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*:

> Thou awakest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it rest in Thee.

II

God is the Creator and man is His creature; and creatureliness means dependence, means that man must find the meaning of his life, not in himself, but in another—in God. And that is the point at which the revolt of man begins. It is intolerable to man that God should be at the centre of the universe and not man.[1] And so man takes up arms against God. In this rebellion the weapons that man uses are the gifts that God has given to man to be used in His service. God has created man in His own image and likeness, and commanded him to

> be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it (Gen. i. 28),

and to have dominion over all that is upon the earth. But man is not content with this. He would become a god; and so he projects upon the heavens the image of his own self-hood, and before that image man falls down and worships, crying: "Thou art my God!"

[1] Based on Hoskyns' *Cambridge Sermons*, pp. 49 f.

This self-idolatry of man God punishes with the most terrible of His punishments. God leaves man to himself.

God leaves man to himself—man whose dignity consists in the very fact that he is made in the image and likeness of God. Then does the image of God in man become a broken image, so that in everything that man does this brokenness becomes manifest. In thus punishing man God has no other choice, except—— But we shall come to that.

God leaves man to himself because man wills to be left to himself, wills to be left worshipping the projection of his own self-hood. So long as man is occupied in these religious exercises, man cannot see the truth. Man has, to use the words of St Paul,

> exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. i. 25).

III

God leaves man to himself. Fortunately for man, God does not really do this, for then man would perish utterly. Rather, God stands by until man's self-idolatry shall have worked itself out, until man, reaping the fruits of that self-idolatry in the perversion of everything that he attempts to do, shall in despair at the evil he has brought upon himself cry out for succour to the true and living God, to God the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

IV

And in the meantime God the Creator does not leave man without witnesses to His own beneficence. God goes on giving to man sun and rain, day and night, the changes of the seasons, and the fruits of the earth. And man ought to have seen in these things the gifts of God. That they are attributed more often to an impersonal Nature rather than to the living God is part of man's deliberate repudiation of God. As St Paul says:

> For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; so that they are without excuse: because that, in spite of knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks (Rom. i. 20-21).

V

But in the field of personal relationship God leaves man to himself. Here, again, not entirely. For God the Creator has placed man within a certain social order from which man cannot altogether escape. And this order, despite the fact that it has been marred by man's rebellion, witnesses to God.

VI

There is *the order of the family*, for example. Every human being who comes into this world must be the child of a father and a mother. And the relationship between that father and that mother must have been, even where that relationship is marred by unfaithfulness or subsequent strife and separation, a relationship of love. And love, the love of one human being for another, witnesses to the supreme love, the love of God.

VII

There is *the order of the State*. The State exists to make possible an ordered social life. The State must therefore demand of the citizen obedience, and the obedience that the citizen owes to the State as the condition of his freedom as a citizen witnesses to the obedience that all men owe to God, and that is the condition of man's true freedom.

The State, too, must demand of the citizen respect for the rights of others. That means that the State must administer justice; and justice—the rough-and-ready justice of man—witnesses to the ultimate justice, the justice of God.

VIII

There is, again, *the economic order*. If a man is to live he must work, or at least depend upon the work of others. The necessity of work is a continuing reminder to man of his dependence upon the gifts of God in and through the natural order and upon the assistance of his own fellows. The necessity of work is, further, a reminder that he too must contribute to the welfare of others if he himself is to be allowed to live. The necessity of work is thus a reminder of his own creatureliness, of the fact that he is a person with obligations as well as privileges.

IX

Again, there is what, for lack of a better phrase, we may call *the order of culture*. To exploit the resources of the natural order, man must study and submit himself to the laws by which that natural order is governed. In so doing he discovers that Nature does not yield up all her secrets to those who would use them entirely for their own ends. The natural order must be studied for its own sake; truth must be sought for no other reason than that it is the truth. And so once again man is won from self-concern and delivered over to investigate the world that God has made for its own sake. It is the fruits of this disinterested quest that we call culture.

X

Yet, so profound is man's self-conceit, so deep is his resentment against God, that man twists even these tokens of the Creator, these reminders of his own creaturely status, into means whereby he may glorify himself.

XI

The family, that speaks of love and dependence and of mutual consideration, may be made the occasion of pride. We all know the pride of birth, the pride of belonging to an exclusive class or caste, the petty snobberies that make the social life even of cathedral cities unnecessarily difficult, the petty snobberies that wound the sensitiveness of others, that mar the gentleness of love.

XII

The same pride manifests itself one stage further in *the order of the State*. The State exists to make social life possible by administering justice. Because men are sinful, because they do not always respond to the word of persuasion, the State must in the last resort be able to use force to compel obedience. Because the State is threatened from without by other States, the State must again use armed force to protect its frontiers and to maintain justice. But the powers of the State, the powers given to it by God, are administered by sinful men. And men may and do use these powers, not for justice, but for the aggrandizement of their own

nation, for, fundamentally, the aggrandizement of self. Man's supreme ambition is to become God. To exercise the powers of the State—more, to use those powers to dominate other States—is to become a god. The Dictator is supremely the self-idolatrous man. The Dictator comes to believe in himself as a god,[1] and to resent all criticism of his actions, all opposition to his will. He demands ever-increasing tokens of his godhead, both for his own conceit and to satisfy his worshippers. He must trample others under his feet; he must go on and on until the *dénouement* happens. And because in doing this he must oppose his will to the will of God the Creator, he inevitably becomes the persecutor of all those who place obedience to the will of God the Creator before obedience to the will of the Dictator. False worship leads to false action—within, the persecution of the Church and of the Jews; without, the attack upon neighbouring countries, war.

But it is not only within Totalitarian States that these evils take place. Always the machinery of the State is in the hands of sinful men. Always, therefore, there is the danger that the power that rightly exists for the maintenance of justice may be used by sinful men for unjust ends. And the duty of the Church to the State is to remind the State whence its power is derived and for what ends it must in consequence be used.

> Pilate therefore saith unto Jesus, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and have power to crucify thee? Jesus answered him, Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above (John xix. 10-11).

XIII

The economic order which forces man to work for his living produces in its turn other forms of pride. The New Testament repeats again and again its warning against the dangers of wealth; for wealth produces once more the illusion of independence, the subservience of others, the possibility of imposing the will upon others. The industrial magnate is a dictator in the field of industry. He too suffers from a belief in his own godhead. Indeed, in so far as we command wealth, we all come under this danger.

[1] Rauschning, *Hitler Speaks*, pp. 128-9. "It is not surprising that a man who has been able to realize so many of his dreams should be drunk with power and believe himself a god."

XIV

But it is supremely in *the order of culture* that human pride most clearly manifests itself. To discover, man must be humble; but he may attribute to his own powers the fruits of his discoveries. The period of history which achieved most in the field of discovery and invention was the period which conceived of human progress as inevitable, as a process that would go on indefinitely. And Swinburne sang:

> Glory to man in the highest:
> For man is the master of things,

and, by so doing, summed up a whole movement that has its roots in the Humanism of the Renaissance and that reaches forward to the Dialectical Materialism of Russian Communism, the German Faith of Totalitarian Germany, and the practical Secularism of England, France, and America. Deep is the irony in the fact that the discoveries and inventions on which the nineteenth century prided itself are the weapons with which Europe is destroying to-day the monuments of a thousand years of civilization. Man has been commanded to subdue the earth and to have dominion over all that is in it. That over which he has not control is the nature of man himself. The creature that has rebelled against God remains the victim of his own disunified nature.

XV

I have described the orders whereby God seeks to remind man of his creatureliness, and have shown how man makes even these orders to minister to his own pride. But there is one order to which I have indeed alluded, but of which I have not written explicitly. It is *the order of nature* itself.

Man's life is lived within two brackets—birth and death. The existence of man upon this planet is equally set within two brackets. There was a day when human life upon this earth began. There will come a day when human life upon this planet will be extinct. This fact means that the significance of human life cannot be found in man. Man cannot be at the centre of the universe if the universe can go on without him.

The fact of death then remains as a fact supremely shattering to man's conceit of himself. And man attempts to

escape from this fact either by neglecting death or by denying it. All doctrines which would lead man to set his hope upon a Utopia to be realized upon this earth neglect the fact of man's mortality—neglect, too, the fact that the image of God in man is a broken image, so that in all that man does this brokenness becomes manifest. A doctrine of immortality, on the other hand, involves the denial of the fact of death. There is within man an ego, a soul, that does not really die. Yet this demand for immortality is, from another point of view, a recognition of the fact that the meaning of life cannot be found in history, cannot be found within the brackets of birth and death. The meaning of life is not to be found in man the creature, but in God the Creator.

XVI

So we come back to the point from which we started. God is the Creator and man is His creature. Creatureliness implies dependence. Dependence upon God man finds intolerable. So man the creature projects upon the heavens the image of his own self-hood, and before that image of himself man falls down and worships, crying " Thou art my God !"

> Glory to man in the highest:
> For man is the master of things.

God's punishment of man is to leave man to himself. That means the disintegration of the orders that God has established. The love of husband and wife can no longer be maintained, for faithfulness has gone. The State has become tyrannical, for reverence for justice has gone. The economic order has become the greatest tyrant of all, for the individual is no longer respected as a person. The order of culture is denied, for propaganda has taken the place of the disinterested quest for truth. The order of nature has become an idol under the name of blood and race and soil. It is the situation that St. Paul described:

> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man. . . . Wherefore God gave them up (Rom. i. 22-24).

And yet God did not give them up. Not only, as we have seen, did God establish witnesses to Himself in the order of

the created world, witnesses that man could never wholly escape, but God did something more—God took the initiative. God sent his Son to seek and to save erring man, bound down in the untruth of his idolatries.

God sent His Son. But the Son of God came in such wise that He could only be recognized by the humble. Man in his pride rejected and crucified the Son of God. To such lengths was man in the blindness of his rebellion compelled to go! And, once again, God did not resist; God left man to himself. When man crucified Jesus, man did his worst, did it to God. And only when man had done his worst did God reverse the judgment of man by raising Jesus from the dead.

The Gospel of God is, therefore, a proclamation of the initiative of God, of the length to which God was prepared to go to bring rebellious man to his senses. Yet man in his self-idolatry will go on rejecting the Gospel of God. But that Gospel can be received by the humble. To see the truth of Jesus crucified is to see the truth about ourselves. So is our self-idolatry smashed, and the way opened to know that we are the children of, and owe obedience to, God the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.

J. O. Cobham.

John Smith, a Cambridge Platonist

I

On August 7, 1652, John Smith died at the age of thirty-six. The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and all the heads of the colleges attended his funeral. Many of those present knew they had lost a friend, but Symon Patrick, one of Smith's pupils, who preached the funeral sermon, felt he had lost a father. The sermon is worth reading, both for the genuine affection which inspired it and for what it tells us about John Smith. He was one of those

> who will embrace everybody as a son, so they be but willing to be taught; men who cherish the least gasping, panting life that is in any soul. . . . I never got so much good among all my books by a whole day's plodding in a study, as by an hour's discourse I have got with him. For he was not a library locked up, nor a book clasped, but he stood open for any to converse

withal that had a mind to learn. It may be truly said of him, that a man might always come better from him; and his mouth could drop sentences as easily as an ordinary man's could speak sense. He was one that soon saw into the depth of any business that was before him, and looked it quite through; that would presently turn it over and over in his mind, and see it on all sides; and he understood things so well at first sight, that he did not often need any second thoughts, but usually stood to the present resolution and determination of his mind. And such instruments God hath always in the world; men of greater height and stature than others, whom he sets up as torches on a hill, to give light to all the regions round about; men of wide and capacious souls than can grasp much. This would be the greatest honouring of him, if we would but express his life in ours, that others might say when they behold us, "There walks at least a shadow of Mr Smith" (*Discourses*, pp. 493, 495, 496, 507, 508, 519).[1]

Very little is known of the details of Smith's life. He was born at Achurch, a small village near Oundle, in Northamptonshire, not later than the early part of the year 1616. His parents were advanced in life when he was born, and his mother died shortly afterwards. His father, John Smith, was a small farmer residing at Achurch, and was churchwarden for several years. He went up to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1636. He became Bachelor of Arts in 1640, and took his Master's degree some time before 1644. In that year he became a Fellow of Queens' College. He owed his promotion to the favour of the Earl of Manchester, and to his own ability to satisfy the Westminster Assembly. He spent most of his time at Cambridge, reading, teaching, and preaching in Queens' Chapel. He was known, even in those days, as the living library. His application to his studies probably aggravated the tuberculosis of which he died.

Smith was a pupil of a profound and original thinker, Benjamin Whichcote, and a friend of Cudworth and Worthington. These were members of a group of able scholars who were nearly all students at Emmanuel, and who are generally known as the Cambridge Platonists. The oldest of them was Whichcote; the others all belonged to later sets of undergraduates. But colleges in those days were smaller than they are now, and all the younger men came under Whichcote's influence.

[1] All the references are to the pages of the 1859 edition of the *Discourses*.

Whichcote found many good men of his time divided from each other by things which he could not think were of the first importance. Too much stress, he thought, had been laid upon the importance of dogmatic definitions; too much energy was wasted in elaborating, defending, and enforcing them. He held the opinion, dear to many Englishmen, perhaps especially to laymen, that men should let well alone things which were of secondary importance and disputable, and should pay attention to the plain teaching about God and our moral obligations, which is found in Scripture, and may be based on reason. His writings are evidently the work of a man with wide experience of the world, who was aware of the importance of the moral duties enjoined by religion, and who combined a practical interest in theology with no great liking for its subtleties.

From 1636 onwards Whichcote had the opportunity, which he well knew how to use, of making his opinions known in Cambridge from the pulpit of Trinity Church. His teaching seemed to offer a way of escape from the dogmatical controversies of which many good and sensible men were thoroughly weary. Many of his old friends shook their learned and disapproving heads: at Trinity Church they heard too much about reason and too little about faith; too much about nature and not enough about grace. But the younger part of his audience, and especially those of Emmanuel, who knew him as a member of their own college, listened eagerly; and in their own writings they followed his lead.

Smith's *Discourses* are the work of one who combined the learning of a scholar with the temper of a saint. Among the minor theological works of the seventeenth century they hold a distinguished place. The influence of this book upon the development of religion in England may not have been great, but at least its merits have not passed unnoticed. John Wesley included long extracts from it in his Christian Library, with the comment that though he knew his unlearned readers would not make much of it, yet he could not bring himself to deprive those who could understand it of "so great a treasure". Matthew Arnold recommended parts of it to be read by candidates for Holy Orders, and Dr Inge has said that he does not know a better collection of university sermons. There seems little reason why this book should not be still more widely read and

known. Besides his great learning, Smith brought to his task a rich spiritual experience and literary gifts of a very high order. In his *Discourses* he was able, not only to lay the foundations of a Christian philosophy, but also to express the meditations of a saintly soul in language of great beauty.

II.—The Introductory Discourses

The first Discourse, "On the True Way or Method of attaining Divine Knowledge", is the most often quoted, and therefore the best known of all Smith's writings. In it he explains and defends his belief that a good life is the only approach to true knowledge of God. He found that this doctrine had been taught by some Greek philosophers, and was embedded in the New Testament, especially in the Fourth Gospel.

> Were I indeed to define divinity, I should call it a divine life, rather than a divine science, it being something rather to be understood by a spiritual sensation than by any verbal description, as all things of sense and life are best known by sentient and vital faculties. To seek our divinity merely in books and writings, is to seek the living among the dead: we do but in vain seek God many times in these, where His truth too often is not so much enshrined as entombed: no; *intra te quære Deum*—seek for God within thine own soul; He is best discerned *νοερᾷ ἁπαφῇ*, as Plotinus phraseth it, by an intellectual touch of Him. That is not the best and truest knowledge of God which is wrought out by the labour and sweat of the brain, but that which is kindled within us by a heavenly warmth in our hearts. The reason why, notwithstanding all our acute reasons and subtle disputes, truth prevails no more in the world, is, we so often disjoin truth and true goodness, which in themselves can never be disunited; they grow both from the same root, and live in one another.
>
> Divine truth is better understood, as it enfolds itself in the purity of men's hearts and lives, than in all those subtle niceties into which curious wits may lay it forth. And therefore our Saviour, who is the great master of it, would not, while He was here on earth, draw it up into any system or body, nor would His disciples after Him; He would not lay it out to us in any canons or articles of belief, not being indeed so careful to stock and enrich the world with opinions and notions, as with true piety, and a Godlike pattern of purity, as the best way to thrive in all spiritual understanding. His main scope was to promote a holy life, as the best and most compendious way to a right belief (pp. 1, 3, 4, 9).

Smith then deals with an objection which may be brought against this teaching, that a good life is the right approach to the knowledge of God. If we do not know what is good, before we are good, how can we become good? To meet this difficulty he appeals to an innate knowledge of goodness, which, though clouded in all men, is quite obscured in none. The Cambridge Platonists made much of that natural knowledge of truth and goodness which they thought had survived the Fall. Such natural ideas of goodness as they found in men's hearts were to them the few jewels of the soul, which bore witness to her former wealth. They found such ideas, even in the minds of the pagans, whose books they had read with care. They therefore assumed that every man has some natural knowledge of goodness, to which sound teaching could appeal.

> There are some radical principles of knowledge that are so deeply sunk in the souls of men, as that the impression cannot easily be obliterated, though it may be much darkened. Arrian hath well observed, that the common notions of God and virtue impressed upon the souls of men, are more clear and perspicuous than any else; and these are both available to prescribe out ways of virtue to men's own souls, and to force an acknowledgment of truth from those that oppose, when they are well guided by a skilful hand (p. 14).

When he has thus stated and defended his central belief, that the road to the true knowledge of God lies in a good life, Smith then speaks of two erroneous forms of belief—superstition and atheism. The superstition which he describes and attacks is not only that of pagans, though his liberal use of classical authors makes it seem so. In his words there rises, only half concealed in classical dress, the figure of the contemporary Puritan, with his fear of hell and his grim piety:

> Superstition—to lay aside our vulgar notion of it, which much mistakes it—is "an over-timorous and dreadful apprehension of the Deity." And therefore the true cause and rise of superstition is indeed nothing else but a false opinion of the Deity, that renders Him dreadful and terrible, as being rigorous and imperious; that which represents Him as austere and apt to be angry, but yet impotent, and easy to be appeased again by some flattering devotions, especially if performed with sanctimonious shows, and a solemn sadness of mind. And I wish that that picture of God which some Christians have drawn of Him,

wherein sourness and arbitrariness appear so much, doth not too much resemble it (p. 26).

We are not so well rid of superstition, as some imagine, when they have expelled it out of their churches, expunged it out of their books and writings, or cast it out of their tongues, by making innovations in names; it may twine about our secret devotions, and actuate our forms of belief and orthodox opinions, when it hath no place else to shroud itself, or hide its head in. Nay, it may mix itself with a seeming faith in Christ; as I doubt it doth now in too many who, laying aside all sober and serious care of true piety, think it sufficient to offer up the active and passive righteousness of their Saviour, to a severe and rigid justice, to make expiation for those sins they can be willing to allow themselves in (pp. 37, 38).

In the short discourse on atheism our author had in mind the Epicureans, and in particular Lucretius. His careful and almost reverent treatment of that great poet reflects the qualities of his own mind. He discerned the noble and sometimes passionate desire to liberate mankind from degrading superstititon, which touches with glory the *De Natura*. The temper of his comments is far removed from that of Calvin's reference to " that filthy dog, Lucretius ".

Smith's study of the great poem had strengthened in his mind the opinion that superstition, by misrepresenting God, had prepared the way for atheism.

Atheism could never have crept so easily into the world, had not superstition made way and opened a back-door for it: it could not so easily have banished the belief of a Deity, had not that first accused and condemned it as destructive to the peace of mankind; and therefore it hath always justified and defended itself by superstition (p. 42).

The atheists hoped to remove from men's minds the fear of natural calamity and the terror of the world to come.

Having thus laid bare their motives, Smith criticizes their arguments, especially their atomic theories about the origin of nature. To attribute the power of motion to atoms, without seeking any source of that power beyond their own nature, is

as if one that undertakes to analyze any learned book, should tell us how so many letters meeting together in several combinations, should beget all the sense that is contained therein, without minding the wit that cast them all into their several ranks (p. 47).

Thus the atheist is compelled to use bad arguments to rid the world of unworthy superstition. His motive in so doing is to make men happy. But is it possible for him to achieve this end by urging men to discard all forms of religious belief? What happiness can he offer?

> How little of pleasure these short lives taste here! And therefore Epicurus, seeing how slippery the soul was to all sensual pleasure, which was apt to slide away perpetually from it; and again, how little of it the body was capable of where it had a shorter stay; he and his followers could not tell where to place this beggarly guest: and therefore as Plutarch speaks: "one while they would place it in the body and then lead it back again into the soul not knowing where to bestow it." This is all the portion of atheism, which teaches the entertainers of it to believe themselves nothing else but so many heaps of more refined dust, fortuitously gathered together, which, at last, must be all blown away again. What the Stoic said in his cool and mature thoughts, "It is not worth the while to live in a world empty of God and Providence," is the sense of all those that know what a Deity means" (pp. 52, 53, 54.)

III.—The Immortality of the Soul

When introducing his discourse on the immortality of the soul, Smith refers to three beliefs which lie at the basis of his theology:

> Now for these three articles of faith and practice, I think if we duly consider the Scriptures, or the reason of the thing itself, we shall easily find all practical religion to be referred to them, and built upon them. The nature of God and of our own immortal souls both show us what our religion should be, and also the necessity of it; and the doctrine of free grace in Christ, the sweet and comfortable means of attaining to that perfection and blessedness which the other belief teaches us to aim at (p. 62).

Smith then explains why he takes the immortality of the soul first. His theology is mainly introspective, and he believed that a knowledge of the nature of the human soul would lead to a knowledge of the God in whose image it was made.

> We shall first begin with the immortality of the soul, which, if it be once cleared, we can neither leave any room for atheism (which those, I doubt, are not ordinarily very free from, that

have gross material notions of their own souls) nor be wholly ignorant what God is: for, indeed, the chief natural way whereby we can climb up to the understanding of the Deity, is by a contemplation of our own souls. We cannot think of Him, but according to the measure and model of our own intellect, or frame any other idea of Him than what the impressions of our own souls will permit us: and therefore the best philosophers have always taught us to inquire for God within ourselves; "Reason in us," as Cicero tells us, "being *participata similitudo rationis æternæ*" (p. 62).

Smith first draws attention to the fact that most men at all times have been as ready to believe that the soul was immortal as that they had any existence at all. To-day it might seem optimistic to say that plain men had never questioned this belief, and that misgiving was confined to "some unskilful philosophers, who have wit and fancy enough to raise doubts, like evil spirits, but not judgment enough to send them down again". Still, the hold which this belief, apparently so repugnant to the evidence of our senses, has had upon men's minds requires some explanation. Whether or no it has been a first principle of human thought, to be accepted, so to speak, in its own right, there can be no doubt that for most men it has been a matter of belief, and not a conclusion of any argument. It is, therefore, not impossible to think that a power, not of this world, begets it in men's minds.

The writer knew that his words would carry little weight to those who had not the habit of introspection. We look out of ourselves upon a world of death and decay, and it is hard to think that we are not altogether part of it, sharing its dissolution. But when we turn our thoughts within, the soul "will soon tell us its own royal pedigree and noble extraction by those sacred hieroglyphics which it bears upon itself".

The main body of the discourse is intended to establish the fact that the soul is not matter, and this fact, coupled with the principle "that no substantial and indivisible thing ever perisheth", gives the required result that the soul is immortal. The arguments which Smith uses to show that the soul is not material are of great interest; they include a criticism of the atomic theories of Lucretius, who anticipated in some ways a view of the origin of the world and of man, which has become popular with the development of modern science. Towards the end of his argument

Smith states the religious and perhaps mystical convictions which had weight in his own mind.

> Though every good man is not so logically subtle as to be able, by fit mediums, to demonstrate his own immortality, yet he sees it in a higher light. His soul knows it shall never be deserted of that free goodness that always embraceth it; it knows that Almighty love which it lives by, to be stronger than death and more powerful than the grave; it knows that God will never forsake His own life which He hath quickened in it; those breathings and gaspings after an eternal participation of Him are but the energy of His own breath within us: if He had any mind to destroy it, He would never have shown it such things as He hath done. Divine goodness cannot—it will not—be so cruel to holy souls that are such ambitious suitors for His love (pp. 103, 104).

A. C. Scupholme.

American Subsoil

One question, and one question alone, has been the European preoccupation with America, not only since the beginning of the war, but for some time before that: Will she come in? Perhaps by the time this appears it will have received some sort of definitive answer. But, though that question and its reply presumably have repercussions in all kinds of directions, there is much excuse for ignoring it and attempting to cut down below the level at which such political decisions are made to the level where the ultimate value of the immediate decisions may be gauged. It is a dangerous attempt; for the risk of generalization, considerable anywhere, is vastly multiplied over the amorphous stretches of the North American continent; and with the added disability of personal ignorance the task would seem fantastically futile. But where only a keyhole view is obtainable the witness of the eavesdropper may be better than no witness at all.

The Anglican reader is conscious of a growing ecclesiastical noise from across the Atlantic of the sort that he can recognize. He sees the imposing list of American collaborators to this journal; he occasionally sees proud possessive references to various notable ecclesiastics in the *Church Times*; perhaps he has even seen Canon Iddings Bell's scarlet biretta. If he reads *Christendom* he is aware of the detached and disconcerting observations of Dr Joseph Fletcher. If he reads reviews he will know of a pugnacious symposium called *Affirmations* by " Seven American Anglo-

Catholics ". And perhaps if he reads books he has wondered who Dr P. E. More was that *he* should have been selected to write the Introduction to an ambitious volume with the encyclopedic title *Anglicanism*. He wishes to know more, but there does not seem to be anywhere where he can find it.

Let us take the last name first, as interestingly individual but also representative. Paul Elmer More seems to stand at the top of rather a bleak, uninhabited mountain. Connected with Dr Irving Babbitt as a defender of classical values and Greek culture against the iconoclastic extravagancies of a disorderly philistinism, he ended by finding the coping-stone of classicism in the Catholic Faith. The process was quite deliberate (something of it can be traced in his *A Sceptical Approach to Religion*, New Sheldon Essays, vol. ii, 1934) and, though always accompanied by an assertion of the limits of the intellect, thoroughly rational. It is not, as a matter of fact, always quite clear how much space More required the mind to vacate in favour of " religious experience ": sometimes he asserts its validity as a sign-post showing the boundary of pure reason; at other times he disclaims any such experience for himself or, by implication, as essential to his faith. And in his little study of Mysticism (a reprint in 1932 from his bigger volume *The Catholic Faith*) he is quite clear about the differentiation of religious function —nearly proclaiming a double standard of demand and achievement. " As for the Christian, let him not suppose that a humility content to abide within the limits of traditional orthodoxy with no passion for the immediate vision of God, and to restrain the ambitions of his intellect within the circle of Platonic Idealism, is a lowering of his religious or philosophical courage."[1] On the other hand, his own faith, when he came to it, was never half-hearted, but a glove boldly thrown down in the face of criticism and naturalistic unbelief. He was willing, for instance, to appear before the General Theological Seminary, N.Y., in 1934 to address them, and to do so in no mood of compromise with the world: " Unless the Church of to-day can recapture some of that realization of spiritual values her preaching of love to God will fall on ever-deafer ears, and her pleas for the brotherhood of man will evaporate into a sigh or do a little to hasten the advent of an antireligious State governed by those who understand human nature better than she."[2] And his

[1] *Christian Mysticism*, pub. S.P.C.K.

[2] From *On Being Human* (New Sheldon Essays, 1936, iii).

quiet personal reminiscences, which seem to come, as they were published, right at the end of his life, though actually written under disguise some years before, conclude with the confident self-embarkation: "And so I sit and wait, in patience and serenity—for the end which is no end."[1]

These same reminiscences, however, reveal a weakness which may be taken as symptomatic of American religion. After an interesting and sincere discussion of the dependence of the Eucharist upon the Incarnation he continues: "Nor do I personally care to be a partaker in the communion. I am satisfied, I even prefer, to remain in undisturbed contemplation as a spectator, leaving the active rôle to the priest, whose function it is. So sitting, and watching, and hearing, and meditating, I seem to be brought very close to the heart of the creating and redeeming God" (*ibid.*, xxx). That is the reaction of the devout neophyte, of one who has never graduated beyond the Mass of the Catechumens. It is the mark, perhaps, of a notable humility—yet it is a weakness. The weakness is not so much personal as a weakness in the religious background, both in the tradition from which More was converted and in the inadequate tradition to which his conversion introduced him. Admiration without union is a primary but not a final stage. But perhaps the final stage was denied him through no fault of his own: and perhaps there had to be some who got thus far, yet not so far out of sight of their fellows that they could not beckon them to follow. And More, though he did not seem the type to be always enthusiastically beckoning to those behind, was himself by his very integrity and quality of mind an invitation at least to closer inspection.

The general impression one gets from More is that such religious conviction as his is isolated and somewhat exotic (in the best sense). It is also inevitably somewhat academic and dependent upon literature and learning. This is borne out by other instances of the same type. Dr H. N. Fairchild has recently issued the first volume of what is to be a vast series of books on *Religious Trends in English Poetry*. This first volume is sub-titled "Protestantism and the Cult of Sentiment", and covers 1700 to 1740. From this erudite but witty and generous examination he concludes: "Perhaps there is an instinctive reluctance to accept an hypothesis which points to the conclusion that the romanticism of the

[1] *Pages from an Oxford Diary*, written 1924-5; pub. 1937, O.U.P.

1780 to 1830 period is simply Protestant Christianity in a more or less delightfully phosphorescent state of decay." Now such a judgment would not come easily to anyone who had not managed to shake himself clear of a century's prejudice against dogmatic religion. And in Professor Fairchild's lively Introduction it is clear that he expects to meet with some bewilderment among his own people, for he disarms their opposition and anticipates their conjecture as to his critical and philosophical presuppositions by roundly declaring that he is " an Anglo-Catholic in theory and practice ". But this implies that such is an unusual state of affairs. And such American novels as I have read certainly confirm the poverty of the American religious background: witness the impossible spiritist rantings which is the only religious tradition discoverable in all the vivid pictures of that moving and effective, though occasionally cheap and melodramatic, best-seller, *The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck. Out of eighteen leading writers approached in 1939 by *Partisan Review*, only one could give a positive answer to the question (one of seven posed to them): " Do you find, in retrospect, that your writing reveals any allegiance to any group, class, organization, region, religion, or system of thought ?" That was a Miss Louise Bogan who said: " I was brought up in the Roman Catholic Church, and was exposed to real liturgy, instead of the dreary ' services ' and the dreadful hymnody of the Protestant Churches. . . . But I knew I was a member of a racial and religious minority. . . ."[1] On the whole, however, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the U.S.A. seems to be that of a pip in the jam rather than a leaven in the lump, and is apparently limited to the Irish city-dwellers, the puritanical film critics called the " League of Decency ", and Father Coughlin's radio fans.

Yet, if there is no existing religious tradition into which the convert can be introduced and where he will find himself at ease as a part of a social whole, there are certainly signs that some are beginning to feel the lack of it. At least, one seems to detect a certain wistfulness (instead of the old contempt) in references to literary figures, such as Mr T. S. Eliot, who have been able to discover and enter such a tradition. In a fascinating review of the *Oxford Anthology of American Literature*, Mr R. P. Blackmur discusses

[1] *P.R.*, Summer and Fall, 1939: " The Situation in American Writing."

the difficulty for Americans of appreciating the religious element in Eliot, especially selections from Eliot in an anthology: " You will think you know what you are reading with no more authority for your opinion than the fact your thoughts and Eliot's essay are in a common language; for you will belong, probably, among ' those who have never heard the Christian Faith spoken of as anything but an anachronism '. With religion as the fecundating element of your whole moral and intellectual machinery, which I take to be Eliot's feeling, you will have no acquaintance whatever. It will not be your fault, or perhaps even your lack, any more than it is your fault that you are American, or your lack that you are not French . . . Well ! Your anthology, and Eliot's essay as an extreme example within it, just confront you. In the nature of things it can do no more; nor can you."[1] (The essay referred to is Eliot's " Religion and Literature ", included in the anthology under review.) And Mr Blackmur concludes from studying the whole anthology that " American literature is scrub oaks from mighty acorns ", that " the stunting, the lack of virility, the resort to nostalgia, refinement, allegory, and violence in wide assortment, comes from a radical failure in the double knowledge (or awareness) of good *and* evil. . . . It is as well for his pleasure in reading that the anthologized reader will not understand Eliot on the relation between religion and literature ". But this last sentence does tacitly infer that it *is* ultimately the American's " lack " that he has not the necessary awareness. And at least all the writers in this tough-minded and scrupulous periodical will give no quarter to sentimental substitutes for the awareness. In a devastating article, " Democracy and the Curriculum ", in the Autumn, 1939, number of *S.R.*, Mr H. D. Roelofs attacks a symposium book of that title on Education, being the third year-book of the " John Dewey Society ". First he says that those who adopt the outlook of the book (militant humanist) " have captured control of most of the prominent Schools of Education, notably Teachers' College at Columbia University ", hence its importance. The New School, which they aim to produce, will supplant the home influence and educate the child into happy, alert, progressive, democratic integrity. " The whole intent is to make the school sovereign. . . .

[1] In *The Southern Review*, Summer, 1939. (Hereinafter called *S.R.*).

The educational movement represented in this book presents to us citizens this question: Is religion to remain outside the sphere of State control or are our children to be indoctrinated by the New School with the religion of its own creation, Secularism?" To allow that question to be asked at all in a periodical which owes allegiance to no religion is a sign of grace.

Meanwhile the more positive signs of a preparation for a religious renaissance are to be found not so much in an explicit revivalism as in an unconscious feeling towards, or a semi-instinctive need for, more natural social values—a feeling which is slowly and laboriously pushing up its head above the accumulated deposit of a suffocating century of totalitarian industrial ideology. This emergence is to be found chiefly in the South, and *The Southern Review* is therefore its best arena, but it does occur all over the place and with varying religious contacts. The rooted love for the soil and its infinite possessiveness, a love splintered into hopeless fragments by the coming of the tractor and the dollar—this was the most impressive part of Steinbeck's uneven novel already mentioned, where the work of the tractor is dead easy, " so easy that the wonder goes out of work, so efficient that the wonder goes out of land and the working of it, and with the wonder the deep understanding and the relation". In Allen Tate's fine novel, *The Fathers*, the understanding and the relation are both there, and only a little way below the conscious surface of the life depicted is a spiritual understanding and a mystical relation. " Nobody to-day can hear the night; nobody wishes to hear it. To hear the night, and to crave its coming, one must have deep inside one's secret being a vasy metaphor controlling all the rest: a belief in the innate evil of man's nature, and the need to face that evil. . . ." All this is the unconscious metaphysic beneath the natural relationship of man to the land: " It was significant that we always spoke of the Carters of Ravensworth, the Carys of Vaucluse, the Buchans of Pleasant Hill. The individual quality of a man was bound up with his kin and the ' places ' where they lived. . . . Even years later I am a little amazed to hear a man described as the coal man or the steel man or the plate-glass man, descriptions of people after the ways they make their money, not after their manner of life." It is not surprising that this should come from Mr Tate, for he was one of the group of writers who together wrote

I'll Take My Stand (1930), the Manifesto of the Agrarian Movement of the South. The more directly religious implications of all this discussion of geological, ecological, and sociological patterns appear in Professor G. R. Elliott's fascinating book, *Humanism and Imagination*.[1] Professor Elliott, who was a friend of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, professes a "liberal catholicism" with a literary flavour. But more important than his ecclesiastical allegiance is his vision that "the sky-scraper, regarded in Europe as the symbol of America, should be regarded in America as a late symbol of Europe, as an offshoot and upshoot of the European lust of size and power". The European discovery of America was, he says, an intense and successful concentration of the culture of Europe in one special direction: "Industrious Protestantism". But "this great cult was better fitted for rapidly exploiting the resources of a new soil than for the full discovery of the spirit of a new country". To incarnate the higher self of America "in the very flesh of the land, to cultivate the supernatural life in and through the natural life, to maintain the height of Christian faith while rebuilding the Church in vital correspondence with the vast and complex face of the new land and nation—that task was far too large for Industrious Protestantism". His conclusion is that "our religious workers should engage so far as possible in the working of the soil"; and that "this vast and fecund section of the earth's temperate zone—which, unlike the rest of that zone, had missed its natural period of pagan civilization—called" (and still calls) "for a Christianity with plenty of pagan blood in its veins and a pagan breadth of imagination".

Now some will find that conclusion suspect, and will find still more suspect Mr Allen Tate's conclusion to a similar discussion in his essay, "Religion and the Old South" (from *Reactionary Essays*). First Mr Tate shows how the Southern tradition broke down because, though they had a religious life, "it was not enough organized with a right mythology. In fact, their rational life was not powerfully united to the religious experience, as it was in medieval society". Then he asks, How is the Southerner now to take hold of his tradition? "The answer is: By violence. . . .

[1] Reviewed by S. L. Bethell in THEOLOGY, November, 1939. Mr A. Mizener's account of the book in the *S.R.* for Autumn, 1939, is more severely critical.

He cannot fall back upon his religion, simply because it was never articulated and organized for him." And so, as he cannot work from within, the only remaining method is " political, active, and, in the nature of the case, violent and revolutionary. . . . The Southerner is faced with this paradox: he must use an instrument which is political, and so unrealistic and pretentious that he cannot believe in it, to re-establish a private, self-contained, and essentially spiritual life ". He means, I suppose, some form of political and especially financial and commercial separation from the industrial autocracy of the North as the necessary preliminary to a religious and cultural reinstatement. To a civilization which has for generations had to associate missionary work with economic imperialism that will seem a curious conclusion, an irreverence as well as an irrelevance. And it is true that the theological orthodoxy concealed behind such preliminary tactics, as also in the utterances of many of the writers discussed in this essay, is of doubtful exactitude.[1] Yet the sociological program of these Agrarians may be the secular preliminary to a sacred revivification. If it is true that the eras of metropolis, megalopolis and tyrannopolis[2] are closing, English Christians must listen to these people—*e.g.*, " We need only look at England to see what happens when a people and people's economy over-match the capacity of their land. . . . The people go; the land disappears. . . . England has been the suburbs of empire, while actual life itself, the living outside of books and trades and banks, has gone on elsewhere " (Mr Russell Smith on " For the Preservation of the Land ").[3] Well, " actual life " is a concern of the Church; and we must be ready to accept as allies of the Truth those who, with no blasphemous limitation of biblical eschatology, apply to godless and joyless industrial metropolitanism the more ultimate phrase: Here we have no continuing city.

W. R. Jarrett-Kerr.

[1] Our readers will remember Mr Bethell's query about Professor Elliot to this effect. They may also know that Professor W. M. Urban, whose large and painstaking book on logic (*Language and Reality*) was pronounced valueless by Dr F. L. Cross (Theology, May, 1940,), was one of the contributors to *Affirmations*, and so presumably calls himself an " American Anglo-Catholic ".

[2] See Lewis Mumford's encyclopedic and convincing study, *The Cultures of Cities* (1938), which in spite of its dubious philosophical outlook is a cogent plea for " regionalism " and for the new " biotechnic order " to which we must now advance.

[3] *S.R.*, Winter, 1939: a fascinating article.

MISCELLANEA

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THE CHURCH IN POPLAR

The clergy of the Deanery of Poplar had been concerned, for some considerable time before the war, about the problem of evangelism. They had recognized that amongst other things which hindered the Church's efficiency was its immobility both as regards man power and resources. This immobility is, of course, consequent upon the historic position of the Church in this country, which we generally call Establishment. The so-called parson's freehold, which is part of this historic heritage, while it has certain obvious advantages, does in fact present to any diocesan a very difficult problem, for, in practice, it means that he cannot move his men unless they choose to be moved. And this certainly does not make for ecclesiastical elasticity.

Our financial arrangements, which have their roots almost as deep in the historic past as our arrangements for personnel, result in an immobility of resources which can be little less than paralyzing.

One only has to think of the Church as Christ's Army to realize how disastrous this immobility may be in the face of an enemy who possesses all the flexibility which modern conditions make possible. No secular general officer would be content if none of his officers could be moved without their consent, and his material resources only adjustable by Act of Parliament. No soldier would hope to win a war if he were so hampered. It is an obvious commonplace to say that if victory is to be achieved the personal interests of the individual must always be subordinated to the good of the cause. And if men are willing to sacrifice their most precious personal interests in order that their country may be victorious it seems reasonable to expect that the servants of Christ shall be as ready to make sacrifices in order that the Church may win her victory over the evil powers. The Poplar clergy felt that, if their parson's freehold

stood in the way, they were willing to sacrifice it, and to tell their Bishop that, so far as they were concerned, they would place themselves as entirely at his disposal as if the "freehold" were non-existent. The Bishop's way was, then, clear, if he felt that reorganization was desirable.

A consideration of the religious situation in our own borough brought to light certain illuminating facts. It was evident that the actual number of practising Christians, using that term to denote the really devout members of the various Christian bodies in the town, was alarmingly small. Three or four per cent. would probably be a generous estimate. Further, it became evident that Christian places of worship in the area could be classified under one of two headings, the Strong Centres and the Weak Centres.

The Strong Centres were places of worship belonging to various Christian Communions, which could fairly be described as flourishing and which clearly made a definite impact on the neighbourhood. The Strong Centres all had one thing in common: they were able to command considerable financial resources, in most cases from outside the borough. They were in consequence able to provide themselves with sufficient staff and apparatus, and were able to carry on their work with efficiency and a certain *élan*. It was possible for them to run prosperous and extensive organizations and thus to make contact with large numbers of people, amongst whom they found a steady stream of converts. And their staffs and people were optimistic and lively.

The Weak Centres were places of worship, again belonging to various Christian Communions, run usually by one clergyman, though sometimes by two, who were trying to carry on with inadequate resources and whose available cash could be reckoned in hundreds and not in thousands as in the case of the Strong Centres. Their staffs were inadequate and their apparatus insufficient.

The clergyman and his small though devoted flock felt themselves lucky if they could just keep the ship afloat. One former Bishop of Stepney used to say that running a parish in the East End of London was like trying to walk up an escalator that was comng down—if at the end of the year you were where you were when it started you had done exceedingly well. The effect of this treadmill-like existence upon pastors and people could hardly be expected to be exhilarating. Indeed, no one could be astonished if after some years of it clergymen lost their enterprise and the people began to feel that being a Christian simply meant keeping St So-and-so's going. The whole energy of the pastor and his flock was used up in maintaining a plant designed in more prosperous days for a congregation four times as large as the present one, and in keeping things going. And for most of the Weak Centres any real

extensive or missionary work was impossible, and became more and more so as year succeeded year.

It was, therefore, obvious that if the Church in East London was to become once again an evangelizing force—a real offensive army—drastic revision of its methods of using its man power and its material resources was necessary.

We had come to that conclusion when the war intervened and made all our problems incredibly more acute. In the widespread evacuation which began soon after war was declared, and has continued in fits and starts ever since, gradually becoming more intense as air warfare became more alarming, great numbers of our people left their old homes and migrated to what they considered to be safer neighbourhoods. With this exodus went very many of those who had been the devoted helpers of the Weak Centres, with the result that they became so weak that it was clear that something must be done and done quickly.

The Bishop of London, in view of the fact that the Poplar Chapter had already made representations to him and had placed themselves in his hands, decided to use his emergency powers and to adopt a policy of grouping. By this we mean uniting three or even more parishes together for the duration of the war under one leader. In one instance, for example, five parishes have been grouped. Two of the five churches will most likely be closed. A young leader and a young staff, which it is hoped will not number less than six and may perhaps be as many as seven or eight, will take over. This young staff will live in two clergy-houses and will be in constant association, and thus each man will be provided with the comradeship so necessary in these difficult days. If the leader thinks fit, he will be able to concentrate his staff on particular districts at different times. One bit of the combined parish can be thoroughly visited for a fortnight or a month, and the staff then transferred to another district. Indeed, the grouping method opens a vista of possibilities.

The financial resources of the combined parishes will, it is hoped, enable the leader to provide the adequate staff we have already indicated and the necessary apparatus. In short, instead of several Weak Centres with their necessary inefficiency and their depressing effect upon both staff and people, there will be one Strong Centre. There can be little doubt, we think, that these Strong Centres will make it possible for the Church of England in East London to recover its old verve and dash, and to become once again an army no longer on the defensive but ready and able to attack.

KENNETH ASHCROFT.

RELIGION IN THE HIGHLANDS

The Highland Line is a frontier—perhaps more of a frontier than the Wall. It is not just a frontier between states, but between races—between Celt and Saxon. The Highlander is a Celt, with all the moodiness, fecklessness, and charm of the Celt; and although the framework of his life is set among institutions that are derived from the Lowlands, he has modified their character considerably.

Nowhere is this more true than in the religious sphere. Of course the dominant religion is Presbyterianism, but this has been imposed on the Highlands, it is not the native growth that it is in Lowland Scotland. The Highlander may cling to its outward forms, notably rigorous "Sabbath observance", because he has been told that they are integral parts of the national tradition; but this is not true of the Highlands, where no one tradition has an historical monopoly. Here there is an amazing diversity. One glen may have remained Roman since the Middle Ages; the next may have a majority of Episcopalians; while the next, again, may be sternly "Wee Free" or "Original Seceder". Probably nowhere else in the British Isles do religious traditions and habits vary so widely.

It is a land of sharp cleavages: between "Church members" and the unattached; between Church and Church; between ministers and people. The ministers of all the varying Presbyterian Churches seek to exercise real authority over their people. Denunciation by name from the pulpit is still no uncommon thing. But now, when here as elsewhere religious sanctions have lost something of their force, some seek to uphold their authority by means of their position in the local government. On the whole, the standard of pastoral work and efficiency is not high—not as high as it is in the Scottish Church in the Lowlands. The Churches have few organizations, such as English village Churches have; the Sunday Schools are very perfunctory affairs, where they do exist. The Established Church clergy are loudly insistent upon their rights and privileges, rather in the manner of Archdeacon Grantly. Many of the enlightened laity, while remaining loyal to the Church, are becoming more and more impatient of this clerical domination.

Among the older and stauncher "Church members" there is still much bigotry and intolerance of other Churches. The "Wee-er" of the many "Free Churches" are the worst offenders here. On the whole, the laity of the Established Church are enlightened, friendly, and tolerant, active in work for and support of their Church. Presbyterian union is still a long way off, however, but it will come. Economic pressure helps to bring the day nearer. It is unthinkable that after the War a town of 900 people will be able to support four rival kirks, representing four rival forms of Presbyterianism.

In some parts of the Highlands Roman Catholicism is strong, and is a healthy native growth. As in most other parts of the world, the Romans are loyal to their Church; but the Highland Roman is a courteous and tolerant person. The Episcopal Church, which is strong in some districts, and truly native in ethos, enjoys a good deal of prestige. This is partly due to the fact that most of the " lairds " belong to it, and partly due to the respect paid to the pastoral zeal and efficiency of most of the Episcopal clergy.

One of the greatest, and saddest, differences between religious life here and elsewhere is the sharp cleavage between the attached and unattached. It is the inevitable reaction to the bigotry of the past. And the few gracious contacts that still hold in England between the Church and the indifferent laity don't hold here: there are no Harvest Festivals, no Watch-night Services. Babies are baptized, when they are baptized at all, at home; marriages take place in hotels. One goes to church pretty regularly—or not at all.

The difference between Celt and Saxon comes out most clearly in the fact that, to the Highlander, religion is more of an affair of personal loyalty than of reasoned conviction. He is not the theologian that the Lowland Scot is said to be. For all except the small minority of really keen and instructed members of the various Churches, the personal popularity or otherwise of the minister is the deciding factor in church-going, and the " semi-detached " will flit from Church to Church light-heartedly. Usually the frontier is drawn at the Episcopal Church ! But this is not always so, and certain services, like the midnight mass at Christmas, are very popular. But it is rare for anyone finally to change allegiance, to be confirmed, or become a communicant member of another Church. When, in the majority of Churches, Communion is given only half-yearly, it is naturally not regarded as of much importance. The old " Fast Days " before Communion have become holidays, at least for the Established Church people. The proportion of people who attend church regularly is no higher than, if as high as, in the English countryside; and the proportion of those baptized, and of communicants, is much lower.

The task of the Episcopal Church here is a difficult one. There has been no Oxford Movement in this country. (To this fact, the Romans attribute the fewness of their converts.) There is, in most Highland villages, literally no knowledge or observance of the Christian Year; worship, in our sense of the word, is not understood—a service is a " meeting ", at which one listens, not even joining in the Lord's Prayer; sacraments are unknown. The general belief is that one must be converted before " sitting for Communion ".

Our task at present must be largely the bearing of silent witness. One can only thank God that the witness is being heeded more

and more. Even the simplest of our churches bears witness to the beauty of holiness. Ever-open churches are appreciated by the most surprising people.

People are impressed by the fact that we say daily services—a useful reminder that religion is not, as the Sabbatarians think, an affair of Sundays only. There is a growing appreciation of the Gospel character of the Christian Year, and a desire in some quarters to observe it. The best interpreter of our way of worship is the B.B.C., which is doing wonders in breaking down old prejudice against us. People who have never been in one of our churches are learning to like our type of service.

Highland religion lacks much that we can give it. Yet if we set out to hunt for proselytes we only arouse opposition—rightly, I think, if we hunt for them among those who already go to other churches; the non-church-goers are, of course, fair game. I conceive the function of our Church to be this: to foster the "Oxford Movement" that is beginning to arise in the Established Church; to explain, to interpret the Catholic Way to ministers and people; so that the Church of Scotland may corporately advance in Catholic Faith and practice until as a body she is ready for corporate reunion with us. She could bring to such a union many priceless spiritual and intellectual graces and gifts.

D. B. Macgregor.

SURVEY OF BOOKS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

The thirteen books sent in for inclusion in this Survey are of so varied a nature that it is difficult to make profitable comparison of one with another or to attempt more than the roughest classification. There are four books of what may be called the sermon type. *Sketches and Studies in Theology*, by the late Dom Anskar Vonier, O.S.B., Abbot of Buckfast (Burns and Oates, 7s. 6d.), consists of articles and addresses selected and arranged for publication by Abbot Vonier himself. He did not, however, live to see their publication nor, presumably, to correct his own proof; had he done so, such affronting errors as *onomousia* for *homoousia* as the watchword of Nicæa on page 2, the mis-writing of two Greek words on page 48, and *per acti* in two words, instead of *peracti*, making nonsense of a Latin quotation on page 70, would perhaps not have occurred. Apart from such mistakes the book is extremely uneven. There are lovely sentences and memorable phrases, and the whole chapter entitled *Pax Christi et Regnum Christi* is outstandingly good; but on the other hand there is a narrowness of charity and an unhumble cocksureness of opinion that one cannot but deplore. We cannot, for instance, agree with the Abbot's apparent satisfaction with the Thomist philosophy as final (pp. 107 *ff*), nor can we accept such bold presumptions as that, in regard to

the practice of retarding Communion after Consecration, " no doubt Christ Himself taught the Church the manner of this liberty ", and that " when once the Church had found out that she could keep the Eucharist for a while, she understood that there was no limit to her freedom " (p. 113). Nor can we help regretting that one so nobly generous to the heathen's striving after God should have so little reverence and sympathy for his even-Christians outside the Roman fold. A rather smug preoccupation with the Roman Church as she is, rather than with the whole Church as she is meant to be, is unfortunately a disfigurement which appears not infrequently; and on the whole these *Sketches and Studies* strike one as sketchy rather than studious, though they will doubtless prove more acceptable to those who share the Latin taste for hard dogmatic outlines than to those who, like the present reviewer, find definiteness of faith by no means incompatible with cobalt distances of unknowable mystery. The second book, *The Worship of God*, by A. Herbert Rees (Pax House, 3s. 6d.), consists of a course of Lent sermons that have already been published in the *Church Times*. As sermons they were doubtless excellent, but they do not make a very satisfying book, and the argument is sometimes fanciful. For instance, we are told that when the lamb had been sacrificed, as by Abel, " no longer could its wool be used for clothing or its milk for food ", regardless of the fact that the victims were always males. The third book, *Catholic Teaching on the Blessed Sacrament*, by Gerard Sampson, C.R. (C.L.A., 1s. 6d.), suffers from too big a title, for its twenty-nine tiny chapters (in 64 pages !) furnish no such systematic presentation of the doctrine as one is led to expect. They read like addresses to a gathering of the C.B.S., and as such probably had a value which, as so often happens with the spoken word, evaporates in print. The last book of these four, *The spirit of man and the Spirit of God*, by J. W. Hunkin (Blackwell, 2s.), consists of three sermons preached before the University of Oxford in 1939. The first two are somewhat jejune and lacking in gospel power as sermons, and the third, which is much more alive, is spoilt by the Bishop's own peculiar obsessions in regard to the sacramental system. A quotation from Schweitzer in the second sermon, moreover, on the relation of the Spirit to the Logos (p. 23), with which the Bishop thinks " we can to a large extent agree ", strikes one as considerably less than orthodox.

The next three books are each of them *sui generis*. *The Credal Statements of St Patrick, as contained in the Fourth Chapter of his Confession : a Study of their Sources*, by J. E. L. Oulton (Dublin, Hodges and Figgis; London, O.U.P.; 2s. 6d.), is a brief but scholarly study refuting the idea that Patrick lived before the age of formulated creeds and giving convincing evidence of his literary dependence chiefly upon Jerome's version of the Commentary of Victorinus on Revelation xi, 1. Dr Oulton

shows the saint to have been fully within the Gallican tradition, and adduces numerous other parallels to his teaching from other Patristic sources. *Contemporary English Theology: an American Interpretation*, by Walter M. Horton (S.C.M., 8s. 6d.), is a fresh, kindly appreciation of English theologians and their thought which one reads not with interest only but with a certain measure of gratification: what Briton, for instance, can fail to kindle at such a compliment as "the magnificent ability of the English mind to rise superior to logic"? As a work of scholarship, however, the book cannot be recommended, for in several contexts it shows a serious lack of acquaintance with facts. For instance, the author persistently (pp. 120*f.*, 144, 164*f.*) uses the term "sacramentarian" in the sense of sacramental, whereas in point of fact it is its exact opposite, being the term coined by Luther to denote those who, like Zwingli, recognized in the Eucharist *only* the sacramentum or outward sign. Similarly, on page 135 he says that Catholicism has so far tended to avoid the dilemma between Augustinianism on the one hand and Pelagianism on the other "by some sort of semi-Pelagian compromise", ignoring the fact that "semi-Pelagian" carries the exact technical sense of one who acknowledges co-operative but not prevenient grace. Again, on page 144, speaking of Lambeth as having become "a great patriarchate, with which all the ancient patriarchates of the Eastern Orthodox Church were in full communion and the modern Church of Sweden to boot", he falls into three errors in one breath: Lambeth is not "in full communion" with any of the Churches named, since they do not share each other's sacraments; no Church other than the five, Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, recognized as such by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, has ever been a patriarchate; and the Church of Sweden, which is based on the Confession of Augsburg and has a Lutheran episcopate, is not even Catholic. These are bad mistakes, and such as may be dangerously misleading in a book which, besides being superficially attractive, has the appearance of academic authority. One reflects regretfully that the world of theological literature would be safer walking for wayfaring men, such as the younger clergy and the thoughful laity, if the Doctors of Divinity who set out to teach them always read the Fathers and other sources of Church history and doctrine for themselves. *The Foundations of the Modern World*, by Cyril E. Hudson (Allen and Unwin, 7s. 6d.), is the second volume of a trilogy under the general title *The Church and the World: being Materials for the Historical Study of Christian Sociology*, of which the first, without sub-title, was the joint work of the present author and Maurice B. Reckitt, while the promised third will be by the latter alone. It is enough to say that having the second volume given us to review made us buy the first and want the third, and that the scissors-and-paste method has never been more skilfully and

profitably employed. The present volume begins with the period of transition between the Dark and Middle Ages that opened in the ninth century, and carries us down to the disintegration of the medieval economic synthesis in the middle of the seventeenth. Like its predecessor, it presents the facts with an admirable clarity: the quotations of which it largely consists are relevant and clear, the headings let one know exactly what is being talked about, and there is an excellent bibliography to each chapter. Altogether a most valuable work, and excellently printed.

The remaining six books deal in various manners with specific doctrines. *Essai sur la nature de l'unité religieuse* (Casterman, Tournai and Paris, n.p.) is the essay of an Anglican layman, Arthur Smallwood, translated after his death by the Abbé Couturier. It is interesting and sincere, but by assuming part of that which it sets out to prove—namely, that, since God is Himself infallible, He must have provided a corresponding centre of infallibility on earth, which in the writer's view is, of course, the Papacy—it fails to carry conviction. *The Assurance of God*, by Patrick Carnegy (Vol. II in the Teaching of the Church series, edited by Canon Roger Lloyd, Longmans, 7s. 6d.), is a humble, thorough, single-minded attempt to show ordinary people what the Christian faith really is. It is somewhat overloaded with quotations, and one feels that the book as a whole would be easier to digest if the writer had dared to let himself go; for the last chapter, on The Household of Faith, where he does do this, is really beautiful. Elsewhere his very thoroughness makes it a little difficult to see the wood for the trees, but the agnostic arguments of the day are met with such quiet assurance and sincerity that the book cannot fail to be of real use. For the last four books before us we have nothing but praise. F. Mascall's *Man: his Origin and Destiny* (Signposts, No. 3, 1s.) presents the Christian doctrine of man, so often and so long forgotten, as the only possible basis for a stable civilization; and *The God-Man*, by the same author (Signposts, No. 5), is a masterly statement of the doctrine of the Incarnation and its implications, in popular yet dignified language. Both books should be read by all believers and given, lent or recommended by them to all their unbelieving friends. *The Meaning of Churchmanship*, by Kenneth Mackenzie (Mowbray, 6s.), is intended for those who have no previous knowledge of the subject, but will be profitably read by many established Christians. It is a refreshing as well as an instructive book, combining scholarship with simplicity, and written with the gracious lucidity that characterizes all the Bishop's work. *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching*, by Vincent Taylor (Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.), is the sequel to *Jesus and His Sacrifice*, published by Macmillan in 1937. Those who have read the earlier book will need to be told no more of this one than that it is worthy of its fellow; and those who have

not will be well advised to get them both and save up for the third, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, which is already in the press. With books of this kind it seems almost impertinent to praise; and it is hard to find adequate expression of one's gratitude for work at once so scholarly, so devout, and, Wesleyan though the author is, so profoundly Catholic. One hopes most sincerely that the fact that these are big books by a learned writer will not restrict their public: clergy and students will of course rejoice in them, but Dr Taylor's exquisite clarity of thought and beautiful English bring them within the reach of all intelligent persons who really want to understand the Bible; and if such will but give themselves to the task, they will reap therefrom a far richer harvest of worshipping comprehension than from any number of pious books of slighter type.

A Member of C.S.M.V.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE CONFLICT IN ANGLICAN THEOLOGY

To the Editor of Theology.

Dear Sir,

I am indeed grateful to Mr Michael Bruce for his friendly reply to my criticisms, which were in fact made largely because I remembered a conversation I once had with him at Swanwick. What he now says about the Church makes it clearer to me than ever that the dispute here is merely a question of words. I do not think that Mr Bruce will wish to deny that (if we leave out the question of sin in the Church) the Church exists on earth in order to convert the world in the same sense that the Son of God was incarnate on earth in order to save the world. That is all I am contending for; and it does not seem worth while to pursue the discussion further.

The real division between us lies elsewhere. I assert that reason and conscience in the natural or unconverted man must test and judge the truth or genuineness of the Christian revelation presented to them. Mr Bruce, as I understand him, denies that they can do so. According to him, I take it, a non-Christian can only begin to apprehend and assent to the truth of the Christian gospel when a special inspiration of the Holy Spirit has already given him Christian faith: till then he can only reject it. Thus the Christian revelation, according to Mr Bruce, is a revelation to Christians only; to the natural (unconverted man) its content is necessarily repugnant and not a genuine revelation at all. This is what I meant when I said that Mr Bruce made the revealed truth of Christianity "a closed system". If I have misrepresented him, I hope he will correct me. At present

he only objects to my use of the expression " closed system " on grounds which have no connexion with the issue between us. It seems to me quite unnecessary that we should distract our argument with a discussion of the incomprehensibility of God. If I have represented Mr Bruce's theology at all correctly, I can well believe that he does not adhere to it too strictly for purposes of " missionary technique ". His naïveté in accusing me of " hopeless confusion " on this point is quite disarming.

Mr Munby is a good deal less uncompromising than Mr Bruce, and, though he attacks me so vigorously, I fancy he is more on my side than on Mr Bruce's. Reason, he says, can " probabilify " revelation, but not test or judge it. I do not see how reason can " probabilify " anything without testing or judging. Perhaps Mr Munby will explain his paradox. That a man can by the mere operation of reason and conscience either (*a*) attain certitude as to the truth of Christianity, or (*b*) decide to be a Christian, I never asserted, nor do I now. Nor do I see any justification for Mr Munby's implied accusation that I classed Catholic theology with Communism and Fascism. To the best of my belief I did nothing of the kind.

I am,

Yours very truly,

OLIVER C. QUICK.

CHRIST CHURCH,
OXFORD.

THE BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD ON *SONGS OF PRAISE*

" The more I see of *Songs of Praise* the less I like it as a hymn-book. Someone has said that ' if a man were permitted to make the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation '. I may paraphrase this and say that hymns play a larger part in the making of popular religion than theological formulæ. We cannot, therefore, be too careful in the choice of our hymns. Regular church-goers unconsciously learn them by heart, and the doctrine taught in the hymns, by the process of suggestion, is assimilated into the mind.

" Now this hymn-book has clearly been compiled to give a weak and reduced view of certain doctrines of paramount importance regarding the doctrines of the Cross and Advent. . . ."

[The Bishop proceeds to give examples of hymns that have been altered or rewritten.]

" I feel it my duty to say that I disapprove of this book, and I hope its introduction into the churches in this diocese will cease. Those incumbents who find the book already in possession should be at pains to correct the inadequate and weak teaching it contains, for weak views on sin and redemption are two of the gravest errors current to-day."

(Quoted, with permission, from the *Chelmsford Diocesan Chronicle*, September, 1940.)

BOOK REVIEWS

MARXISM: A POST-MORTEM. By H. B. Parkes. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

This is a very notable book: it is perhaps the best hostile criticism of Marxism that has appeared, and it is remarkable because the author so plainly sympathizes with the Marxist effort to understand history and to better the condition of the poorer classes. Mr Parkes, as we know from his earlier books, is a clear and scholarly writer; he has studied the Marxist theory as deeply and sympathetically as any Marxist; and when he decides that Marxism is fallacious in its theory and a failure in practice, he is obviously expressing a reasoned and unbiased opinion and not finding excuses for defending an initial prejudice. And lest any possible reader of the book should be tempted to say "Good. Marxism is wrong. I always knew it", and decide that he does not need to read the book, we must say at once that Mr Parkes has a good deal to say that is of first-rate importance to anyone who takes any serious interest at all in social affairs. In the present turmoil, the few good books that appear are likely not to find their public: anyone who puts a few copies of Mr Parkes' book into circulation will be doing a public service.

Mr Parkes' starting point is admirably described in his introduction: "Freedom, security, justice and peace are the aims of the various left-wing parties in modern politics; and those ideals are unquestionably shared by a majority of mankind. Yet during the past half-dozen years the left-wing movement has met with a long series of disasters, and almost every day brings reports of a new defeat. The question presents itself, therefore, as to whether progressivism has not failed as a result more of its own errors than of the strength of its opponents. . . . The disciples of Marxism are the most energetic, the most self-sacrificing, the most self-confident, and the most disciplined group in modern society. . . . Anyone who wishes to find his bearings in modern politics must therefore begin by examining the assumptions and practices of Marxism."

At the moment, the Marxist movement in Great Britain is under a cloud; Mr Parkes shows that the vacillations and contradictions of Communist policy are due to a radical failure of the materialist conception of history and the labour theory of value. History has not worked out as Marx expected: the proletariat has proved not to be a revolutionary class, and Communism has been relatively successful not in the most advanced countries, but in the most backward. Mr Parkes

gives a lucid yet well-documented account of the limited success of doctrinaire Communism in Russia, and he shows that the failures were due to faults not inherent in Communism. For example, the passion for gigantic but uneconomic undertakings springs not from Communism, but from a weakness of human nature, from which the Christian sociologist is not always exempt. The advantages of a " planned society " are obvious: Mr Parkes reveals the less obvious but no less important disadvantages, and this part of his book might well be studied by admirers of Dr Mannheim's *Man and Society* and Mr Drucker's *End of Economic Man.*

The general trend of Mr Parkes' conclusions supports a Christian view of sociology; but the application of Christian principles to the problems of our own time is still far from clear, and there is no reason to believe that the march of communistic belief will be halted in the near future, or that the disillusion of a renegade Communist will lead him to Christianity.

Our present suspension of domestic politics, and the obvious weakening of the forces of " progressivism," does not represent any fundamental agreement about the nature of man, the purpose of society and the aims and methods of political activity. When the threat of external danger is removed, the old quarrels —the quarrels that broke France—will be resumed with a new violence. It is therefore desperately important that the Christian should do something more than accept the comforting conclusion that Communism is mistaken in its theory and not wholly successful in its practice. He needs to ask why Communism so often attracts more able and more energetic supporters than Christianity. One of the many virtues of Mr Parkes' book is that it goes some distance towards answering that question.

MICHAEL ROBERTS.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICS. The Gifford Lectures delivered in the University of Aberdeen, 1935-6. By Sir W. D. Ross. Clarendon Press. 15s.

In *The Foundations of Ethics* Sir W. D. Ross continues and develops the general principles so strikingly set forward in *The Right and the Good*, published in 1930. The great theme of that earlier work—namely, the intuition of rightness and its independence of goodness—has come under heavy fire. Some have rejected the trend of the " Deontological School ", seeing in it a misconception of what the whole classical tradition of ethics has meant by goodness; some, indignant at the divorce of existence and value, have restated and reaffirmed the intuition that the right is that which produces the maximum of good; others have attacked the alleged intuition of the right as a return to irrationality.

In this book Ross returns to his position undismayed, pleading

that he is not attempting a dogmatic exposition of the whole field of ethical theory, but is concerned solely with foundations which he is not completely assured he has been able to lay well and truly. If any of his views are wrong he hopes that someone by reaction may be able to see more clearly what is true. The method followed is the time-honoured one of Socrates and Plato, of Aristotle and Kant, in starting from the moral consciousness. The conceptions of the right and the good have always been fundamental to ethics, and thinkers who emphasized one have in the long run been obliged to recognize the independence of the other.

The second chapter is a detailed examination of naturalistic definitions of right: evolutionary theories, reaction theories, causal theories, and the positivist theory. These accounts are found to be untenable, both when put forward as definitions and also in the more plausible form as grounds of rightness.

In the third chapter Ross proceeds to consider whether any *non*-naturalistic attempt to define "right" or "obligatory" can be accepted. This is the view for example of Moore, that right means "productive of the greatest possible amount of good". This is no more acceptable than the naturalistic accounts.

In the chapter entitled "Theories about the Ground of Rightness" there is a brilliant passage on the view referred to earlier, that productivity of good is the universal ground of rightness. Ross cannot think of any way to establish this deductively. Quoting his earlier work, he reaffirms the difficulty of an inductive proof of such a view. It would require that actions should be traced into an unending future. Further, he can find none of the self-evidence that Moore claims for the truth that being optimific is the ground of rightness.

Students of Ross will find much to interest them in his reply to the criticisms of Mr W. A. Pickard-Cambridge. Chapter 5 is really his reply to those who hold that his intuitionism is unprincipled. He has discussed the keeping of promises in this chapter at great length, not because he attaches *undue* importance to the subject, but because it is a clear case of a duty that cannot be reduced to the producing of a maximum of good.

Chapter 6 deals with the place of motive in the doing of duty. The doctrines of Mr Joseph, of Professor Field, and of Professor Reid, are found wanting in holding that the rightness of an act can depend on the motive from which it is done. He meets the objection to his theory, that it would produce a discontinuous moral life, by asserting that as well as duties of special obligation, we have also the duty of producing as much good as possible, and such a duty is the development of our own characters. This view of motive and rightness should be compared with the statement on page 293 that character is the grandest bearer of moral value.

Ross is pained that so many people have fallen foul of his

view expressed in *The Right and the Good* that obligatoriness attaches to actions independently of their motives, and moral goodness to them in consequence of their motives. " Possibly the doctrine is less likely to be rejected as a paradox if I indicate what a respectable ancestry it has." Aristotle contains the distinction implicitly when he describes the whole content of the just without any reference to the motive of the agent. Kant, again, distinguishes between doing what is your duty and acting from duty—*i.e.*, from a sense of duty. He thus makes the motive the ground of moral goodness, but the nature of the action apart from its motive the ground of its rightness. For the Utilitarian, too, the rightness of an act is determined by its consequences, or probable consequences, and in no wise by its motive.

In Chapter 8 an interesting account is given of the questions: Can we be said to *know* our duty? How do we acquire this knowledge? In morals it is the case that we do sometimes act from acceptance of fundamental principles, but our insight into the fundamental principles springs from the immediate conviction of rightness or wrongness in a particular case. It is wise to do an act that conforms with the basic principles of morals without further consideration, unless some bad consequence reveals itself on very brief inspection. Again, a man who would break with the *media axiomata* of morality lightly is despising the crystallized experience of many generations.

Ross admits in this chapter that differences may exist among intuitionists as to the degree of obligatoriness of promise-keeping. There might be some who hold that promise-keeping is *sui generis* but yet a duty which rarely outweighs the duty of promoting the general good. Page 188 casts objections to the intuitionist view back upon the holders of the teleological conception of right.

A new subject in this work is the treatment of " Indeterminacy and Indeterminism ". Ross takes the determinist position, but frankly admits that he is not able to reason the problem out satisfactorily. Amongst the closing words of this chapter, and indeed of the whole book, will be found this candid admission. The examination which he makes of modern physics is based on his conviction that the law of causality is universal in its application. There is the telling remark that even if physics could establish the principle of indeterminacy in its own sphere, that could furnish no support either for our intuition of freedom or for our awareness of duty. His determinism is that which takes account of the character of the agent. The doing of two acts indifferently could have no moral value. We regard it as a tribute to a friend to be able to say, " I knew you would do the right thing." Responsibility is not destroyed by this approach to determinism, for bad acts can never be forced on anyone in spite of his character.

The last two chapters are concerned with Goodness and in particular with Moral Goodness. Ross accepts the distinction of Meinong between *Ausdruck* (expression) and *Bedeutung* (meaning). " When we call an object good we are commending it, but to commend it is not to say that we are commending it, but to say that it has a certain character." We can speak of things as good in their kind in a purely naturalistic way by reference to the fulfilment of human wishes. But the goodness with which ethics is concerned cannot be resolved into any relation between the subject and the object. Ross reaffirms his objection to the relational view of goodness as expounded by Perry. When we say " this is good " we *express* our favourable reaction, but we *assert* something of the object itself. For example, when we approve conscientiousness or benevolence we really assert that they are good in themselves.

One distinction that Ross introduces seems to be without foundation—namely, that we are under an obligation to produce pleasures for others but not for ourselves. A more useful purpose is served by the introduction of the terms " admiration " and " satisfaction "—the former to describe our attitude towards objects good in themselves, the latter to describe our attitude towards secondary goods. Pleasure is never good in the most proper sense of the word, but the pleasures of others are good in a secondary sense—viz., that they are morally worthy. The *prima facie* duty of producing what is intrinsically good always takes precedence over the *prima facie* duty of producing pleasure for others.

The chapter on Moral Goodness contains some modification of the earlier statement that motive makes an action good. This is seen to be an over-simplification of the facts. We can discern cases where the motive is good, but failing to consider all the relevant moral details, the person falls short of what an ideally good man would do. A man who is sensitive to all the relevant moral details will do the action which is morally good, and also the right action. On the other hand, a right action need not be a completely or even a partially good act. " Thus a theory which insists on the difference and mutual independence of rightness and goodness is by no means precluded from recognizing those connexions between the two which are well known to common sense."

The Foundations of Ethics is a worthy successor to *The Right and the Good*. Perhaps its greatest value is the continued emphasis on the independence, logically at any rate, of the " right " and the " good ". The collapse of Europe into war has been justly ascribed to the failure of statesmen to be men of their word. Instances are not wanting at the present time of men acting from a good motive—*e.g.*, patriotism—and yet doing the wrong thing. If the sublimity with which Ross invests obligation were more generally accepted it would not only be a good but a better world.

A remark that is perhaps worth making from the Christian point of view is that we should not confound the analysis of an ethicist with the convictions of a theologian. Kant saw this, although his solution has not been found satisfactory. The alarm that Ross has divorced existence and value seems unwarranted. He merely states the facts as they appear within the realm of ethics. To quote his own words, words born of that empiricism which can be witnessed on every page of his work—"the way is left open for a further enquiry whether morality involves a religious basis."

RICHARD ADAMS.

JOY IN BELIEVING. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 5s. THE COMPANIONS OF MARY WARD. By Mother Mary Philip, I.B.V.M. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 6s. TWO ENGLISH CARMELITES. By Sister Anne Hardman, S.N.D. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 7s. 6d. THE HUMAN SOUL AND ITS RELATIONS WITH OTHER SPIRITS. By Anscar Vonier, O.S.B. Third edition. Burns Oates and Washbourne. 6s.

Joy in Believing, which is a singularly apt title, comprises a number of sermons for various Sundays and certain other Holy Days in the Christian year. These sermons were preached by Fr McNabb when he was Prior and Parish Priest at Holy Cross, Leicester. They are both in their directness and simplicity characteristic of the author, and there are few of them which do not either illuminate their subject-matter or touch upon familiar but fundamental Christian truths in their immediate relation to ordinary everyday human existence. In construction and style they have much to teach, but above all their outstanding mark is a great simplicity of word and a homeliness of thought and expression which make them what many printed sermons are not, a delight to read.

In the preface the author modestly suggests that the publisher thought the sermons worth publishing ! The publisher is to be congratulated for so thinking; the result is a book full of good things which may be commended both to clergy, parochial clergy especially, and laity alike.

Mother Mary Philip in *The Companions of Mary Ward* gives a most interesting study of the foundress of her Order (the Institute of the Blessed Virgin), as also of her, Mary Ward's, immediate companions and intimate friends. This work should be of some considerable interest to Anglicans for the sidelights it throws upon the general religious situation in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

"England in the reign of James I was no secure home for Catholics. For half a century they had been bitterly persecuted, and the statutes issued against them were increasing in severity."

So the writer remarks, and the story she has to tell is an impressive record of a brave and eventually successful struggle made by seven typically English women called to the Religious Life during a most difficult time and in the face of every kind of opposition and discouragement. The first three chapters deal with the life-work of the foundress and the remainder of the book with the lives of the seven other of her companions whom Mother Mary Philip denominates as "foundation stones". Every one of these remarkable characters was born within six years of 1580 and the last died in 1667. Apart from the foundress, who was a woman of outstanding piety and endurance, all are attractive characters. We have called them typically English, although from force of circumstances much of their work was carried on abroad. The work to which they set themselves was essentially practical and concerned the education of girls, primarily of English Catholic parentage. The foundress aimed at three things: "(1) Freedom to unite active work—notably the education of the young—with the duties of religious life. (2) Non-enclosure. (3) Government by a Superior-General." The aim was generally speaking novel and ran counter to received tradition, which clung to enclosure especially for women. Mary Ward had therefore to battle with ecclesiastical authority, and, although meeting with outstanding success for a time, her Society suffered official suppression and she herself imprisonment. Ten houses were dissolved by Pope Urban. It would seem that evil rumour has associated her with Protestant ideals. However, despite all this and astounding hardships, she and her companions triumphed and the Institute won its way all over Europe. Today houses exist all over the world. The whole story, fascinatingly told, indicates that Catholic tradition and piety died hard, if ever, in England, and as we have recently been reminded by other works dealing with the same epoch. It is interesting to note that houses were founded in England near such places "as Mass could be heard," and to "outward appearances the houses were merely the homes of a few English ladies living together as friends". From time to time it was necessary to move, and conditions also necessitated participation in social life. Thus we see in a measure how a new outlook and ideal with regard to religious life became part and parcel of the Counter-Reformation by sheer force of prevailing conditions. One may speculate if the later Foundation of Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding was not in reality determined by this aspect of Counter-Reformation aim and ideal.

Sister Anne Hardman's *Two English Carmelites*, in so far as it gives a picture of a quite different aspect of Catholic piety and the Religious Life, stands in sharp contrast to Mother Mary Philip's work. Here our attention is concentrated upon the interior life and enclosure. In both the lives recorded, that of Mother Mary Xaveria Burton and Mother Mary Margaret

Wake, we are dealing with religious experience of more personal and individual type, but none the less the record is one of two English women called to the Religious Life and that of Carmel. Very roughly speaking, the two lives (Mary Wake, 1617-1678, and Catherine Burton, 1668-1714) cover the greater part of the first and second period of the Counter-Reformation; in consequence we may expect to find contact with all that emanated from the Hispano-French School. The MSS of the lives of these two holy women are both preserved at the well-known Lanherne Carmel.

The record of their achievement of sanctity offers much that raises points of psychological and medical interest. It is easy to scoff at or criticize certain things connected either with such facts as those of the mysterious illness from which Catherine Burton was recovered or the incorrupt state in which the body of Mary Wake was found after thirty-eight years in the Convent vault. So far as the evidence goes it would seem sound, and the writer does not appear to claim more than it warrants. In both cases the story of these dedicated lives is told with balance and simplicity so that the reader may form such a judgment as seems good. But quite apart from these matters we have here the history of two lives of undoubted sanctity. It was Mother Mary Margaret's privilege, through the English Carmel at Antwerp, to bear witness to and make known the importance of St Teresa's reform of the Carmelite Order, which reform until her time would hardly seem to have been appreciated here in England directly. Both Mother Mary Philip's work and Sister Anne Hardman's demonstrate the ability of English women to tread the way of Martha or Mary according to the grace and the purposes of God as revealed in the Incarnate Word. On page 31 there is an interesting reference to a privilege accorded by the Holy See to the Carmelite Nuns " to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in a Tabernacle set in the grate dividing their choir from the church, and on certain days the prioress, who kept a duplicate key of the tabernacle, was allowed to expose the Blessed Sacrament ". Lanherne, Darlington, and Chichester still enjoy this privilege, confirmed, we are told, in the case of Darlington by Cardinal Wiseman. We note this in view of the fact that we believe in recent years the matter was raised in the case of Chichester, which was confirmed in the privilege after an appeal to Rome.

Abbot Anscar Vonier's book, *The Human Soul and its Relations with Other Spirits*, is of course well known. It was first published in 1913; this is the third edition. The author was called to his rest before this revision was complete, but except for several small points the work remains his own.

Ivan R. Young.

RECEIVED WITH THANKS. By H. A. Wilson. Mowbray. 7s. 6d.
BEWILDERING CARES. By Winifred Peck. Faber. 7s. 6d.

These two books at first sight appear to be in strong contrast. A second reading will show them to be largely complementary. Fr Wilson gives us the story of his contacts with one bishop and five priests who all belonged to that group in the Anglican Communion which bears the name of Anglo-Catholic. Lady Peck is mainly concerned with the cares of a north-country priest's wife. The particular label to be attached to her main characters would probably be " Mod-high ". Read together the two books give us a very fair picture of that institution so bewildering to foreigners—the *Ecclesia Anglicana.* Fr Wilson's sketches vary both in length and in depth. The most pleasing is certainly the first one of the Rev. P. T. Tindal. The two on Fr Mackay and Bishop Weston suffer from over-long quotations from their sermons and public utterances. Fr Wilson, notably in the sketch of Marcus Atlay, has fallen into that fatal error of allowing himself to use his subject as a peg on which to hang reminiscences of his own past career. One omission in the sketch is rather glaring. One of Atlay's greatest titles to respect lay in the very splendid way in which he took the treatment which was meted out to him by the Anglo-Catholic Congress Movement after the first congress. There was never a word of bitterness from him when the decision was taken to drop the pilot. Lady Peck, though mainly concerned with showing us the cares, parochial and domestic, of a priest's wife, has woven into her story many other strands. Her pages on Mrs Lacely's prayers are quite a sufficient justification for the writing of the book. Her delineation of character, whether clerical or lay, is quite masterly. She is equally at home and apt in describing the church dignitary, the church worker, or the ordinary parishioner in a working-class parish. Many will feel all her characters in their own sphere are perfectly true to life. Her accounts of a quiet day and a small church sale are certainly written from personal experience. Her comment on things ecclesiastical is at times pointed but never is there any bitterness. Her book is in marked contrast to many clerical novels which lack any real appreciation of the difficulties of the clergy. The romantic element is not lacking, since both the organist and Mr Lacely's son Dick appear in the guise of lovers. We hope Lady Peck will bring Dick safely through the war and let us hear more of him. While not dealing exhaustively with the problem of pacifism, Lady Peck has some shrewd things to say on that thorny question. The subject comes into the story through the indiscreet sermon of the curate, Mr Strang. Altogether a very sound and thoughtful book which will still further enhance the writer's reputation. It would be a suitable present for the many not very well informed critics of the Church of England.

R. C. WAINWRIGHT.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE INTELLIGIBLE UNIVERSE IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLOTINUS. By A. H. Armstrong. Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.

An essay in which certain aspects of the system of Plotinus are carefully examined can be recommended with confidence only to those who have some acquaintance with the text of the Enneads. This particular essay also requires for its proper appreciation an extensive knowledge of the writings of many philosophers who preceded Plotinus and fashioned the philosophical traditions which he found ready to his hand.

Plotinus was concerned with the intelligible universe which in the order of logic precedes the material world. At the head of his system stands the One, the ground of being and goodness, incomprehensible, transcending all our powers of thought and expression. Below the One lie Nous, the world of Ideas, and Soul, who informs and directs the material world, working to the patterns which have been seen in the realm of Nous. These two hypostases are united to the One and to each other by a double link; each hypostasis emanates from that which is above it, and returns towards it in contemplation.

The purpose of this study is to examine how these hypostases " fit in with each other and with the whole, what is their nature and function in the universal order ". In doing this, many of the historical origins of the concepts of Plotinus have been investigated. Only those whose main business is the study of philosophy can pronounce upon the value of such researches; but the general reader with a taste for philosophy and in particular for Plotinus will not find that they throw much light on those parts of the system which he cannot otherwise understand.

The spiritual and poetic qualities of the work of Plotinus, his passionate desire for union with the One and his astounding choice of metaphors, make no great show in this essay. The author has evidently felt their spell, but in pursuit of his metaphysical purpose such blandishments are left aside. It may be feared that if Plotinus himself had been equally severe he would now be without the greater part of his readers. For there must be many who, with little interest in his metaphysical system, return again and again to the Enneads, where they find food for their souls.

A. C. SCUPHOLME.

THE PROBLEM OF PAIN. By C. S. Lewis. Christian Challenge Series. Centenary Press. 3s. 6d.

I shall not attempt to summarize here an already compact book. Mr Lewis's prose is known, and those who know it would not thank me for translating it into mine. His style is what style always is—goodness working on goodness, a lucid

nd sincere intellect at work on the facts of life or the great tatements of other minds. The danger for the literary reader n such a style is obviously very great: one reads to enjoy and not o learn or to dispute. It is the reader's fault if he does and ıot Mr Lewis's, who gives him, from the first page to the last, very opportunity of learning or disputing. To add that the vise reader will generally find himself learning is, with Mr Lewis, to be platitudinous.

One of the great and terrible capacities of men is that their eason is a living power, not dependent on immediate personal motion. All my own emotions rebel against the pattern of his book. I do not want to be shown that pain is, or may be, ı good, that (given our present state) its inevitability is a good. When Mr Lewis, having pictured a really bad man, contented n his evil, says, " Even mercy can hardly wish to such a man his eternal, contented continuance in such ghastly illusion," I want o disagree. But it is only such half-speculative sentences that I dare question. The great pattern of the book is wrought oo deeply into Christian dogma and the nature of man (which are largely the same thing; dogma is there but the statement of his true biology) for one to disagree.

It is therefore with a sense of elucidation of something one nas always known that one reads. The plan of the book can oe shown by the chapter headings. The Introductory chapter (i) describes the origin of religion and of Christianity—the existence of the numinous, the existence of morality, the identification of those two elements, the identification of Jesus with That which was both numinous and righteous. It is only after his that the " problem " of pain arises. It involves a consideration of (ii) Divine Omnipotence, (iii) Divine Goodness, (iv) Human Wickedness, (v) the Fall, (vi and vii) Human Pain, (viii) Hell, (ix) Animal Pain, (x) Heaven. (There is a note by Dr R. Havard " on the observed effects of pain ".) The chapter on Animal Pain is perhaps especially valuable, as that on Hell s especially terrifying, and that on Divine Omnipotence especially lucid. It is good to be reminded that " nonsense remains nonsense even when we talk it about God ". Meaning by nonsense, non-sense.

I have quoted from " Hell "; I may quote from " Heaven ": ' Each soul will be eternally engaged in giving away to all the est that which it receives." It is in objection to *that* that pain ies. That we object to it—even that Mr Lewis may object to t—is only of importance, and of pain—to us.

CHARLES WILLIAMS.

SHORTER NOTICES

Two new volumes of " The Christian Challenge " series (Centenary Press, 3s. 6d. each) are by distinguished Churchmen: *The Activity of God*, by the Bishop of Liverpool, and *The Kingdom of God*, by the Dean of Durham. The former is very attractive in its carefully measured writing, its appreciation of the majesty of God and the necessarily slow working out of His purposes; but its judgments on the war suffer from their having been framed in March, 1940. Dr Alington's book is every bit as skilful as one would expect, though it does not go very deep. The reaction from older views is illustrated by the author's almost complete silence regarding the relation of the Kingdom to the Church. But how can the practical implications of the doctrine be expounded without reference to the Church, the Body of Christ, which in the Pauline Epistles largely takes the place of the Kingdom of God in the Synoptic Gospels ?

BOOKS RECEIVED

(*Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.*)

ALLEN AND UNWIN: C. E. Hudson and M. R. Reckitt, *The Church and the World*, vol. iii (7s. 6d.); C. P. Martin, *The Decline of Religion* (10s. 6d.).

ALLENSON: A. Glendinning, *The Faith of God* (5s.).

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS: G. Ogg, *The Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus* (15s.).

CLARENDON PRESS: H. Wheeler Robinson (Ed.), *The Bible in its Ancient and English Versions* (12s. 6d.).

C. W. DANIEL: R. W. Hobhouse, *The Records of Senelder* (1s.).

DUCKWORTH: A. Dakin, *Calvinism* (5s.).

FORTUNE PRESS: Ronald Duncan, *The Dull Ass's Hoof*—three plays (6s.).

HAGUE AND GILL: W. Shewring, *Topics* (5s.).

HEFFER: F. Brittain, *A Short History of Jesus College* (3s. 6d.); F. Brittain and B. Manning, *Babylon Bruis'd and Mount Moriah Mended* (6d.). A delightful account in the style of the seventeenth century of a visitation of the parish churches and college chapels of Cambridge.

LONGMANS: A. F. Winnington-Ingram, *A Second Day of God* (1s.).

NELSON: G. G. Coulton, *Europe's Apprenticeship* (8s. 6d.).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS (ALCUIN CLUB): Walter Howard Frere, *A Collection of his Papers on Liturgical and Historical Subjects* (10s. 6d.).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, vol. xi, Book of the Discipline, Part II (10s. 6d.); W. O. Ross, *Middle English Sermons* (Early English Text Society) (30s.).

S.C.M. PRESS: F. Townley Lord, *Conquest of Death* (6s.); B. A. Yeaxlee, *Handbook to the Cambridge Syllabus of Religious Teaching* (4s. 6d.); F. R. Barry, *Faith in Dark Ages* (2s. 6d.).

SHELDON PRESS: G. Every, S.S.M., *Christian Discrimination* (1s. 6d.).

S.P.C.K.: T. H. Sutcliffe, *Does God Care about the War* (1s.).

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS: E. O. James, *The Social Function of Religion* (7s. 6d.).

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